University of Alberta

Succession Planning for Management Staff at a Western Canadian Postsecondary Technical Institute

by

Barbara Joan Cembrowski

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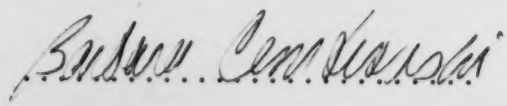

14103 - 91 Avenue
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T5R 4Y1

University of Alberta

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled **Succession Planning for Management Staff at a Western Canadian Postsecondary Technical Institute** submitted by Barbara Joan Cembrowski in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Educational Administration.

J. da Costa, Supervisor

M. Andrews

A. Deane

K. Devine

Date Sept 24/97

Abstract

This study examined the perceptions of management staff of their career development in a postsecondary technical institute. More specifically, forms of succession planning that would be most effective for helping management staff to progress to other positions within the technical institute were explored. These forms of succession planning included (a) administrative internship programs, (b) employee exchange programs, (c) formal training programs, (d) job rotation, (e) lateral job movements, (f) mentorship, and (g) secondments.

The case study method was used to address the research question. Data were collected through semistructured interviews with nine management staff and then were analyzed deductively and inductively.

The findings of the study indicated that management staff perceived the five most effective forms of succession planning to assist them in progressing within the technical institute to be (a) job rotation, (b) formal training programs, (c) mentorship, (d) secondments, and (e) administrative internship programs. Recommendations are made regarding how leaders of the future ought to be trained in conjunction with changing environmental forces.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Burdett (1993) noted that a paradigm shift is emerging in the management process. This is triggered by competition creating the need for strategic partnerships, business complexity requiring management by teams, flatter, leaner organizations yielding fewer managers, and management development demanding individuals who understand the whole business not a single function (pp. 23-24). In other words, the dynamics in organizations are changing to survive the alterations that are brought about by global competition, the "information age," technological advances, and the complexities of doing business today. These changes affect the private and public sectors, including educational institutions. To remain competitive requires a leadership capacity that can be enhanced by an organization as it helps its people develop to face these challenges. The notion of *succession planning* centers on this notion of personnel development.

According to Hall (1986), succession planning is defined as identifying, developing, and nurturing future leaders to candidate status through personal and task learning (p. 235). Its importance was stressed by Burdett (1993), who explained that the problem of recruiting talent in the future, ongoing retirement of talented managers, the high cost of recruitment and the challenge of team fit (p. 23) reinforce the need for succession planning. In this frame of reference, this study has explored succession planning at a postsecondary technical institution (hereafter referred to as *the Institute*) in Western Canada.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to satisfy my curiosity regarding how educators develop their careers in postsecondary technical institutions. As a person coming from the private sector, I perceived career development as the structural

backbone of the culture. This meant that progression and advancement were an integral process tied to motivation, growth, and remuneration. As a management staff member in the private sector, my personal development was planned, progressive, and ongoing. However, now as a postsecondary technical educator, it was unclear to me how careers were developed for management staff in the educational sector. Therefore, it was perceived that career development in the corporate business culture was different from career development in a postsecondary technical institutional culture. In addition, a question existed as to whether there were any structured and deliberate career development and succession planning strategies in place at postsecondary technical institutions.

Identification of the Problem

A critical issue arising in postsecondary institutions is the experience gap left by retiring key administrators and management staff. This has been exacerbated by the downsizing of postsecondary institutions, early retirement options, and an "older age cohort" of administrators. As a result, a notable volume of administrators in the "twilight stage" of their careers has been enticed to exit. This situation has brought to the forefront the lack of "succession planning" for these vacated positions and the absence of career development for potential administrators.

Research Problem

The problem statement emerged as a result of informal observations of how management staff progress or do not progress in their careers. The focus of the research problem was to identify forms of succession planning perceived by management staff to be effective for career development at the Institute.

Sub-Problems

Emerging from the general research problem are four sub-questions. These include:

1. What factors do management staff perceive to have contributed to the success of their careers at the Institute?

2. Are management staff offered any special training or programs to assist them in progressing within the organization?

3. What programs would be helpful in assisting management staff to progress to other positions within the Institute?

4. What mechanisms are seen to have potential for helping management staff to progress to other positions within the Institute?

Researcher Beliefs

It is expected that the development of succession planning at postsecondary technical institutions results in a "preparedness" for management staff to acquire different job positions through career development. This allows management staff opportunities to learn new skills and to understand the expectations of different job positions. Consequently, there is personal and organizational confidence in the people trained for future jobs. Spoor (1993) highlighted this point by stating that the little-known Roops Theory claims that motivated people pass their maximum contributions in a job between 18 and 30 months. When that happens the responsibilities of the position must change to avoid stagnation (p. 4). This point was further supported by McCall and Lombardo (1983, cited in Hall, 1986), who stated that individuals should not be allowed to spend their entire careers in one function. Learning is created by moving people approximately every five years into areas demanding a different set of skills. This is critical for successful executives (p. 262). I believe that succession planning is a means of continual learning and job movement, which nurtures quality performance. Given my beliefs, steps were taken to minimize their effects during the collection and analysis of the data; these steps are outlined further in Chapter Three.

Definition of Key Words

To ensure clarity of terms used in the study, the following definitions are provided.

Succession planning. *Succession planning* refers to the self-identification or the identification of potential candidates by the organization of individuals who are interested in acquiring new skills and experience for career progression and advancement within their institutions.

Forms of succession planning. *Forms* or the mechanisms of succession planning refer to the methods used to acquire new skills and knowledge for management staff to enable them to grow and progress in postsecondary institutions while advancing in their careers. These methods include, but are not limited to, administrative internship programs, employee exchange programs, formal training programs, job rotation, lateral job movements, mentorship, and secondments.

Management staff. *Management staff* includes managers and supervisors such as senior officials, deans, and team leaders of divisions and departments.

Career development. *Career development* is some form of orderly job progression within an organization reflecting individual and institutional motivations and goals. It relies on professional development as a system to develop people's careers in organizations.

Limitations and Delimitations

Eichelberger (1989) defined *limitation* as "an aspect of the research study that limits the confidence the researcher would have in fulfilling the purpose of the study" (p. 242). In reference to limitations, this study has limited generalizability because the participants were purposefully selected volunteers who were chosen on the basis of their career success within the Institute. It does, however, have the potential for transferability of the findings to other postsecondary educational settings. To assist the

reader in assessing the degree to which the findings transfer to other contexts, a description of the characteristics of the Institute related to succession planning is provided in Chapter Four.

Eichelberger (1989) also defined *delimitations* as "those modifications in the research procedure that the research made to increase the quality of the study. A delimitation is usually made to decrease the error, or noise in a study" (p. 243). This investigation addressed only succession planning for management staff; the areas of academic staff and support staff were not addressed in the current study. However, some of the findings may also be applicable to these groups of individuals.

Significance of the Study

The value of the study is fourfold. First, the study identifies potential research issues in an area that has been largely ignored by educational researchers. This could help to further career development theory. Second, by proposing a model on career development for management staff in a postsecondary technical institution, this study makes a contribution to literature because it offers a new perspective on the topic of career development. Third, by adapting a model on succession planning, this study provides a different perspective for thinking about career planning. Finally, because this study deals with an issue of imminent concern, it should lead to different behaviors in educational organizations, such as further incorporating the concept of succession planning at postsecondary technical institutions. It discusses an element of career development that requires immediate attention and that needs to be addressed in administrative policy for future planning.

Organization of the Thesis

The balance of this thesis is provided in five chapters. Chapter Two provides a review of the literature on succession planning. Its focus is primarily on succession planning in the business sector; because of the lack of educational research in

succession planning, limited reference is made to educational sources. Chapter Three describes the participants and the research method used to acquire and analyze the data. Chapter Four describes the findings, and Chapter Five provides a discussion of the findings in relation to the literature. Conclusions, recommendations, and personal reflections are presented in the final chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature review examines the forms of succession planning and their importance to career development for future administrators in postsecondary educational institutions. First, the review addresses the lack of educational research in the areas of career development and succession planning. Second, it draws on research and knowledge from business institutions that use the concepts of career development and succession planning in their organizations. Third, it explores various forms of succession planning (e.g., administrative internship programs, mentorship, and secondments). Fourth, it discusses how secondary education views and implements succession planning. Finally, it discusses the external and internal environmental influences that surround succession planning in education and the effects that these have on the succession planning process today.

Lack of Research

To begin with, there is a "gap" or lack of research in the area of career development for educators. Also, the topic of succession planning in postsecondary institutions is given far too little attention in educational theory and practice. Lamarre and Umpleby (1991) claimed that the authors Greenfield (1984) and Sagaria (1986) agreed that "too little research has been conducted on the study of careers in education" (p. 2). For example, Sagaria believed that the careers of midlevel administrators are largely unexplored and that little is actually known about career opportunities for these individuals in higher-education organizations (p. 8). In addition, Greenfield (1984) stated that "recruitment, selection, training, and career and professional development practices in education have not been systematically studied and do not appear to be well articulated in practice" (p. 33); thus emerges the suggestion that the concept of career development is new to education. Furthermore, Daresh (1986) claimed that with early

school administrator retirements, fewer people entering the profession, and an increase in student enrollment, more needs to be done in the professional development and preparation of school principals (p. 1). Specifically, Anderson (1989) expressed the concern that during the 1990s "nearly 60 percent of all current principals in the United States will retire. . . . Unfortunately, the means by which American principals are trained and selected are often ill-suited to the development and employment of outstanding leaders" (p. 6). As a result, there is a lack of knowledge in preparing potential principals for the challenges of educational leadership.

Secondly, Miklos (1988), echoing DeFrahn (1974), Glover (1970), Hamm (1964), Kelsey and Leuillier (1978), and Stapley (1958), stated that

> one of the major discrepancies between ideal and actual practice in selection policies and procedures is the lack of written policy or explicitly stated procedures. Results of surveys have revealed that only a minority of districts have written policies or planned programs for identifying and selecting administrators. (p. 54)

Thirdly, Miklos (1988), in sharing the perspectives of Chisholm (1980), DeFrahn (1974), Kahl (1980), and Storlein (1983), stated that

> researchers have also criticized the low priority and limited resources allocated to recruitment and selection, the limited preparation and planning for both activities, the restricted involvement in the process, and the extensive reliance on interviews during the assessment of candidates. (p. 54)

In the postsecondary arena, Lutz (1979) indicated that the search and screening processes for deans need to be reexamined and improved (p. 261). In addition, Porter (1982) asserted that the selection of university presidents has no common formula as to its mechanics and specific procedures. There seems to be no disposition to seek models (p. 54). On the subject of leadership development opportunities in higher education, Fisher (1987) commented that "while substantial progress has been made in implementing professional and leadership development opportunities, empirical evidence of the effectiveness and value of the programs continues to elude researchers,

primarily because those qualities are so difficult to assess" (p. 423). Again, this further emphasizes the lack of research and knowledge on this topic.

Succession Planning in Business

Because there is a lack of educational research and knowledge in the area of career development in the postsecondary educational arena, the need to refer to other types of organizations is essential. For example, in corporate business organizations, career development is the structural backbone of their cultures. This means that the progression and advancement of employees is a built-in process that is tied to motivation, growth, and remuneration. Therefore, reviewing literature in business organizations allows for an understanding of their framework in succession planning. In this way, parallels can be drawn and can be applied to postsecondary educational institutions.

To begin with, Spoor (1993) explained succession planning by stating that

> an organization's succession plan identifies individuals who either possess or are in the process of acquiring the requisite key skills and experience for effective performance in a particular position. Most plans also provide a means to identify candidate development and training needs, as well as each person's estimated state of readiness for a specific position. (p. 4)

Also, Spoor believed that operating without a recent and basic succession plan no longer is acceptable for organizations committed to survival in today's environment. Succession planning must be a part of integrated strategic planning activities for both HR (Human Resources) and line management (p. 4).

On the other hand, Rhodes (1988) explained succession planning by its impact over the past few decades. He claimed that

> succession planning came of age in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when leading-edge companies adopted formal succession planning methods that included assessing the performance and potential of a group of talented employees, planning their movement through the organization, and establishing detailed developmental plans. The late 1970s brought widespread acceptance of the notion that companies should define specific executive developmental plans for developmental purposes. The

> 1980s provided the software to manage the huge amount of data accumulated for succession planning. The 1990s, however, are likely to bring nothing but trouble. (p. 62)

In this frame of reference, Rhodes criticized "succession and executive development programs on the basis that they cover too many people, rely on too much data, focus on too many objectives, and rarely produce adequate results for the time and effort expended" (p. 62).

Even though there was disagreement between Spoor (1993) and Rhodes (1988) regarding succession planning, it reinforces the complexity and importance of careful strategic planning within organizations if this process is to work. Spoor and Rhodes emphasized the importance of keeping the plan simple. In this frame of reference, Spoor and Rhodes agreed that succession planning must be usable and manageable. Spoor claimed that it is necessary to "keep the plan clear and simple from the start" (p. 4); similarly, Rhodes claimed that succession planning must be viewed and structured as a strategic and tactical process. That means it cannot be cumbersome, slow and focused on hypothetical situations. Rather, it must be forward looking, flexible, lean, decisive and results-oriented (p. 64).

In addition, Walker (1992) pointed out that "management succession and development planning is difficult to implement. A survey by Sibson and Company, Consultants, showed that many companies do not have comprehensive processes for this purpose" (p. 223). The Sibson and Company *Perspectives* report (1990, cited in Walker, 1992) claimed that

> companies have failed to commit themselves at the most senior management levels to carefully examine the way they recruit, select, develop, and promote their future leaders. . . . Many companies have failed to gather the right leaders, in large part due to their inability to develop effective succession planning systems. The result has been a talent drain and subpar performance at the highest levels of their organizations at time when critical business challenges are facing virtually all companies. (p. 223)

Walker further contended that

> the key factors in implementing the process are policies and systems that will make succession planning part of the ongoing management process, and attitude shifts in support of developmental objectives. Tools need to be practical and results-oriented, tailored to fit the style of management and characteristics of the organization. (p. 223)

Walker's contention summarized the difficulty of implementing worthwhile succession plans that are pertinent and fit with the needs of the organization. Therefore, it is important to understand the concept of succession planning so that the organization does not get lost in its process.

Hall (1986) further added to Walker's concerns of working with succession plans by stating that even though time is spent in developing succession plans, top executives don't pay attention to them because these individuals have come through the ranks of engineering or finance and are accustomed to working with quantitative, objective data. They are not comfortable with more subjective evaluations of people that are contained in management reviews and reviews tend to be discounted (p. 237). In addition, Hall identified another problem in working with succession plans. He said that top management often lack the confidence about the kinds of executive skills that the organization will require in the future. Therefore, there is the problem of committing major human resources to the strategic plan (p. 238). Finally, Hall (1986) was also concerned with the issue that top management consciously attempt to identify the skills executives will need in the future and in this process they select successors in their own image (p. 239). Argyris (1954) found that top executives tended to systematically recruit and promote a "right" type of person, one similar to their own personal style (p. 71). Therefore, Hall concluded this point by stating that information generated by the succession plan on the type of skills required to take the organization forward in the future may be different by present executives and may be ignored because it doesn't fit with the present style of management (p. 239).

Approaches to Replacing Management Staff

According to Hall (1986) and Walker (1992), there are basically three different methods used in replacing management staff. These include (a) a one-position staffing approach, (b) replacement planning, and (c) succession planning. Hall described the one-position staffing approach as a method that is a reactive response to departures, retirements, and disabilities, and deaths. In other words, staffing is done for individual positions at the time they are vacant and it answers the question "how can we find the best qualified individual for this particular job?" There is little concern for developing the candidate because there is no time to do so. He or she must be ready now to meet the demands of this higher-level position. The specific difficulties in this stage are (a) how do we select from a number of talented but unprepared people? and (b) how do we get the person we want to accept this position? (p. 236). As a result, this process has its limitations because it is reactive rather than proactive in resolving the need of replacing management staff in the organization.

Hall (1986) explained the second method or replacement planning as a process by which "senior executives periodically review their top executives and those in the next-lower echelon and agree on two or three backups for each senior slot" (p. 236). Walker (1992) stated that "replacement planning implies continuity of requirements; incumbents will be replaced by individuals with similar skills and capabilities" (p. 224). Hall identified this lack of objectivity as a major drawback to the process by claiming that replacement planning is often done subjectively, without establishing clear job descriptions because back-ups are selected by a team of executives who have "grown-up" in the organization together. They may come to tacit agreement about the qualifications of candidates, however, the agreement may never be tested against relevant skill criteria. The problem is that a limited number of individuals constitute the pool of potential applicants and the "talent is thin." Not enough people have been

"groomed" to be ready to move into senior management positions. The main problem of replacement planning is the "shortage of executive talent" (p. 236).

The third method of replacing management staff is through succession planning. Walker (1992) maintained that succession planning contrasts replacement planning because it is more concerned with longer-range needs and the cultivation of a supply of qualified talent to satisfy those needs. Succession planning entails a more intensive management review of job requirements and the dynamics of changing organizational needs, candidate information, development needs, and specific assignments and developmental actions for candidates (p. 224). Walker further emphasized the importance of this process:

> The development of managers is more complex because requirements are changing as business demands change. . . . It is difficult to develop well-rounded managers when organizations are flatter, leaner, and performing under great competitive pressures. Succession planning is aimed at broadening managers and increasing organizational capabilities. (p. 224)

Rothwell (1994) created a model for succession planning and identified seven steps in this process. These steps include:

> Step 1 - Make the commitment to a systematic succession planning and establish a succession planning program.
>
> Step 2 - Assess present work requirements.
>
> Step 3 - Appraise individual job performance.
>
> Step 4 - Assess future work requirements.
>
> Step 5 - Assess individual potential and use 360 degree feedback.
>
> Step 6 - Close the developmental gap so as to meet succession planning needs.
>
> Step 7 - Evaluate the succession planning program. (p. 59)

Rothwell's model reflects Walker's comments regarding the need (a) to review job requirements, (b) to address changing organizational needs, (c) to acquire candidate information, and (d) to create developmental action for selected candidates. In

summary, succession planning looks into the future and acknowledges organizational needs for the development of management staff.

It is interesting to note that even though careers can be extensively planned for individuals, timing or luck still plays a major role in what happens in a person's career. For example, Miner and Estler (1985) claimed that employees can be viewed as successful and mobile despite the lack of a clear career ladder or a calculated plan for career development. Here, career success is viewed as the result of chance—"being in the right place at the right time." The process appears idiosyncratic, but idiosyncrasy yet may have regular features as an organizational phenomenon (p. 125). In other words, "life" has its ways of setting people's direction and career development.

Types of Learning

In developing management staff, different types of learning are necessary to fit individual and organizational needs. To understand this further, Hall (1986) discussed executive learning in terms of *task learning* and *personal learning*. He defined task learning as improving the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform higher level jobs effectively (p. 245). Katz (1974) discussed this task learning as three basic skills that every successful manager must have in varying degrees. These included (a) technical skills, which are at the lower levels of administration and are the most important work for organizational efficiency; (b) human skills, which are at the middle levels, and a high degree of coordination with other managers and supervisors is required, and (c) conceptual skills, which are important at the senior levels because executives must scan and deal with a complex environment, analyze strategic issues, and engage in long-term planning (p. 90).

Hall (1986) explained personal learning as the mastery of the socio-emotional tasks associated with a person's stage in life. Here adults need to 'grow up' just like any other human being (p. 245). Also, Hall stated that

> executive learning should include the opportunity to discuss and explore one's attitudes toward career and personal life. More specifically, the potential senior executive should have an opportunity to do a self-assessment of his or her own needs interest, skills, and life priorities in relation to the demands and rewards of possible higher-level executive positions to see how well he or she would fit in those positions. This self-assessment should play a major role in determining whether or not the person will remain a high potential candidate. Such a self-assessment would increase the person's fit in higher positions. (p. 251)

Hall further claimed that executive learning can be achieved by a combination of receptive learning or didactic activity such as classroom lectures, environmental learning or putting people in certain environments which are intended to generate certain learnings. Examples include job rotation, temporary assignments and employee exchanges. And lastly, active learning involves creating situations requiring action by the person and this active behavior creates learning. Examples include career and personal counseling, role playing, apprenticeships and on-the- job learning assignments (p. 255).

In summary, according to Hall (1976), these two types of learning are necessary for executive development and relate to the four dimensions of career growth and effectiveness: performance, adaptability, attitude and identity (p. 132).

Hall (1986) identified a cluster of personality factors that make people more open to change. These include "flexibility, tolerance of ambiguity and change, dominance (representing an aspect of positive self-esteem or personality 'hardiness'), and independence" (p. 249). It is also important to note in Hall's comments that successful executives had more

> diversity in the successes. Perhaps they had started up a new business successfully, then managed a large complex project, and then served in a key staff role. Thus, the more changes they had in their career, the more adaptive these executives were. And the more adaptive they were, the more success they experience. . . . Thus diverse, varied experience appears to be a major influence on a person's adaptability. (p. 250)

Hall (1986) stated that feedback and support are strongly needed to facilitate the exploratory and trial activities of working different positions (p. 249). However,

Kaplan, Drath, and Kofodimos (1985) contended that career success hinders learning. This results from executive power impeding feedback and constructive criticism, which are required for self-development (p. 17).

Rothwell (1994) described the concept of 360-degree feedback, which helps to remedy this problem and acts as a way to gather information about an individual from a circle of people most familiar with him or her. This circle may include organization superiors, peers, immediate organizational reports, customers, and suppliers who come into contact with the individual (p. 207). Walker (1992) stated that 360-degree evaluation and feedback were means for fostering a developmental climate where the assessment of a manager came from various sources (p. 241). Rothwell maintained that this 360-degree assessment is usually considered to be more powerful than assessment restricted to the perceptions of a high performer's or high potential's immediate superior. It can help to overcome biases that creep into assessments (p. 207). He further claimed that the individuals themselves may or may not participate in this activity, providing their own input through such alternative means as information about strengths and weaknesses on employee performance appraisals, career development activities, or individual development plans are given (p. 207).

Also, input was solicited in a "formal way," meaning that questionnaires were available commercially for this assessment. According to Walker (1992), "this enhanced the quality and usefulness of the evaluation and feedback" (p. 241). Rothwell (1994) claimed that

> the most popular approach is to rely on commercially available instruments. Other approaches may be used as long as the aim is to collect information from different people and perspectives and the results are fed back to the targeted individual with the goal of identifying strengths and areas for improvement, assessing work performance, or clarifying development needs. (p. 207)

Edwards and Sproull (1985) claimed that employee-selected teams produce performance evaluations that are viewed as fair, objective, and reliable. Here there is

the recognition that both an employee's immediate supervisor and the peers with whom he or she has regular contact can provide important input into a performance appraisal. Therefore, an employee seeks between four and eight evaluators in this process (p. 28).

Walker (1992) agreed with Eichinger, a proponent of 360-degree feedback, who stated that "executive growth is in part due to receiving on-target, accurate, comprehensive, timely, and actionable feedback continuously throughout their careers and specifically at critical junctures of change and opportunity" (p. 241). This type of feedback enhances managerial evaluations. As a result, this developmental tool actively involves the candidate, considers assessments from various sources, and focuses on perpetual feedback and evaluation. However, Kaplan and Palus (1994) alerted proponents to the hazards of 360-degree feedback and advised that great care be taken in delivering negative outcomes from this feedback process. This learning is often painful and has a certain abrasive action that can hurt because it assesses the psychological makeup of people (p. 7). As a result, Kaplan and Palus proposed, first of all, that feedback should be given by a human resource individual who is competent at management development, proficient at personal development, effective with senior managers, and mature. Second, suitable executives who are willing to participate should be chosen by the organization. Lastly, to accommodate the heavy dose of feedback and the resulting unsettled feelings, it is important that the human resource individual help during this unsettled time (p. 9). All in all, 360-degree feedback has its benefits; however, care must be taken in handling the results.

Forms of Succession Planning

To extend Hall's (1986) thoughts on how executive learning is achieved, this section explores the forms of succession planning described in the literature. This includes discussion of (a) administrative internship programs, (b) employee exchange programs, (c) formal training programs, (d) job rotation, (e) lateral job movements,

(f) mentorship, and (g) secondments. For example, Lamarre and Umpleby (1991) stated that "educational organizations have traditionally based themselves on a hierarchical model that associates vertical mobility with career success" (p. 5). In addition, McLaughlin and Yee (1988) claimed that "people do not attach the same importance to lateral moves as they do to vertical moves in the context of subjective career success" (p. 26) Therefore, some of the forms of succession planning, such as secondments and lateral movements, do not reflect the same prestige as vertical movement within the educational organization. These methods could be looked at more positively, however, if they were used as mechanisms for succession planning. Kleiman (1996) helped to reinforce this by stating that it is necessary to think of your career like a web rather than a ladder. Smart workers forget the climb and move along webs to gain more skills. When opportunities arise, they are ready (p. B4).

Walker (1992) reinforced the need to develop skills by recognizing that "companies are realizing that on-the-job experience is the key development activity. Planning and tracking individual progression through relevant developmental experiences are acknowledged today to be the key to building management capabilities" (p. 225). Walker claimed that rotational assignments, special assignments, task force assignments, and transfers across functional or unit lines were provided developmental experiences (p. 244). Hall (1986) further added to the topic of "on-the-job experience" by labeling this area as an *active method* of learning. Here, Hall explained that active learning means creating activities for the person so their active behavior in these programs produces learning. Examples of these methods include: career and personal counseling, apprenticeships, and behavior modeling. Unfortunately, all these methods have been underutilized (pp. 254-255).

Hall (1986) also discussed an area of learning called the *environmental method.* Here, he described that "this process puts a person in a certain environment to create

learning. Examples of these processes include job rotation, temporary assignments, task force assignments, employee exchanges, and job and organization redesign" (p. 254). Hall also saw these methods as developmental for succession planning because it included temporary "broadening" or "development" assignments in other departments or divisions. However, Hall also cautioned that these programs need to be well thought out to be worthwhile for the candidate because they have been inappropriately used (p. 255).

Moss and Liang (1990) also stated that "most learning in the career-long developmental process, however, takes place on the job" (p. 16). Bass (1981) suggested that coaching by the supervisor, planned and guided job experiences, leadership internships, job rotation, and special project assignments be used to improve the performance of leaders at work (p. 568). Gardner (1986, cited in Moss and Liang, 1990) stated that "despite the promise of such development experiences, it seems safe to conclude that we have barely scratched the surface in our feeble attempts toward leadership development" (p. 16).

To understand better the forms of succession planning as discussed by various writers, a description of each concept will be provided. Therefore, the topics of administrative internship programs, employee exchange programs, formal training programs, job rotation, lateral job movements, mentorship, and secondments are described below.

Administrative Internship Programs

Bush and Ames (1984) claimed that internships provide opportunities for faculty members who wish to go into administration and for staff to move into high-level administrative positions. Participants learn about administrative roles and experience them for a year before committing themselves to a career change (p. 26). Along this line of thought, Pence (1989) stated that "internships help prepare administrators for

their jobs" (p. 31). In addition, Johnsrud (1990) asserted that "an internship requires advance planning to secure the support of the appropriate administrators and to ensure that current responsibilities are met" (p. 63). In this instance, she explained that an example of this strategy is to have two peers in an administrative unit agree to alternate release time for internships and to cover for one another (p. 63). In addition, according to Johnsrud, a plus for working as an intern is that "the aspiring administrator has the opportunity to build a relationship with a potential mentor in an administrative area of interest" (p. 63).

Employee Exchange Programs

Dilworth (1995) identified the value of this program by stating that cross-peer coaching occurs as a natural result of the experience. This means that one exchangee begins by understudying the other at their work site. Each exchanges knowledge with the other and new perspectives result (p. 251). Also, Dilworth (1995) claimed that "exchange programs are perhaps most successful when sufficient time is involved, such as six months, to cause the exchangee to accept accountability from some of the decisions made" (p. 251). In addition, Hall (1986) categorized employee exchange programs as an environmental method of learning because new knowledge is acquired in a different environment. Because it broadens and develops an individual, it can be used in succession planning. However, this program requires more thought in its planning (p. 254).

Formal Training Programs

Formal training programs can be viewed, first of all, as learning outside the organization through university courses, seminars, and workshops. And secondly, they can be regarded as learning inside the organization through courses offered by the organization. However, this process of learning is accomplished largely through passive training techniques.

On the positive side, Walker (1992) claimed that

> the major benefits obtained from courses and seminars comes from not what's being "taught," but what's "learned." With regard to program content, managers learn what they do and do not know, how valued this is and why, some new terms and concepts, their own capabilities, and insights on how others apply it. With regard to process and interaction, managers compare notes with others on where they stand, gain and give feedback, clarify values and feelings, and learn how interested they are in learning more about the subject. (p. 247)

McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison (1988) explained that executives found a boost in their self-esteem as a result of their experience from course work because they found they were "as good as the next person" (p. 181). In addition, Dilworth (1995) explained that formal training programs presented by the organization offered a broad appreciation for the business, corporate values, and vision-driving goals and planning. Classrooms are important in bringing together employees team-building experiences, quality management approaches, and shared problem solving (p. 251).

On the negative side, Hall (1986) categorized classroom teaching as a *receptive method* of learning because the learning is primarily passive. He also believed that this method is overused because it is easy to implement, design, and deliver a two-week executive program. It is even easier to send people off to university (p. 254). In addition, Hall (1976) maintained that formal classroom training methods are not especially effective as a mid-career learning techniques by themselves (p. 85). There needs to be the opportunity to apply the learning.

Bolt (1989) declared that General Electric bridges the gap between the classroom and the job by using 'action learning.' Here, managers are taken out of their traditional environments, teamed with peers, and challenged to solve distressing problems facing GE businesses (p. 47). Weintraub (1995) further explained *action learning* as a team of diverse people working on a project to deal with a significant problem. This team is joined by a facilitator who observes and pushes the group into dialogue and reflection on how they work as a team (p. 428). Rothwell (1994) stated

that "this method is popular because it permits executives and managers, whose planned learning experiences have historically been highly individualized, to work together in teams so that they can learn from each other as well as from the action learning assignment" (p. 238).

Bolt (1989) stated that companies are tailoring executive education to make it relevant to needs (p. 20). Walker claimed that "the use of formal training and development programs for managers should be planned on the basis of organizational patterns and needs, focusing ultimately on each individual management candidate's strengths and weaknesses" (p. 248). In conclusion, Walker stated that "participation in developmental programs is costly and should be viewed as an investment, with the same dollars-and cents-evaluation as every other corporate expenditure" (p. 248).

Job Rotation

Dilworth (1995) explained job rotation as a way to promote continuous learning. When accomplished it broadens employee knowledge in ways that open new approaches to process refinement. It represents an effective way of "up-skilling" a work force in preparation for future demands (p. 247). Hall (1986) also placed job rotations in the same category as employee exchange programs. Hall viewed these methods as "environmental methods of learning" that broaden and develop individuals, so they could also be used in succession planning. However, this program requires more thought in its planning (p. 254).

Getty (1993) claimed that "organizations might become unwilling to broaden employees by rotating them across different businesses or functions—experiences that the Center for Creative Leadership has identified as critical to the development of executive talent" (p. 32). To overcome this reluctance to rotating employees, Getty identified a *sharing technique* among top managers. Here, managers present their proposed succession plans for their individual units to each other. In this way,

managers learn about talent outside their area and challenges that exist across the organization (p. 32). In addition, Katz (1974) viewed job rotation as an opportunity to enhance conceptual skills (p. 101). Here, Katz believed that conceptual skills give individuals the ability to view the organization as a whole and to recognize how the functions of the organization depend on one another (p. 93). Lastly, Walker (1992) claimed that formal job rotation programs can be used to train plateaued employees. By developing skills for multiple jobs, companies develop more flexible staffing and more effective team members, necessary to achieve total quality objectives. Career recognition reflects this broader capability rather than advancement (p. 207).

Lateral Job Movements

Hall (1986) described *lateral job movements* by stating that diversity and learning are created because individuals do not spend their entire career in one specialty but move from skill to skill in different positions (p. 262). Hall (1984, cited in Hall, 1986) claimed that "one of the important ways to create diversity, surprise throughout the career, and learning in the internal environment is to adopt a human resource movement policy of lateral movement" (p. 261). Hall (1986) stated that "individuals would not be allowed to spend their entire careers in one functional area or specialty. By moving people every five years into areas demanding a different set of skills, learning would be demanded by the job" (p. 262). According, to Hall, benefits of this process would include learning new problem solving methods, acquiring adaptive skills, and examining personal identity (p. 262). As a result, new learning is acquired.

Bardwick (1986) claimed that people are discovering that there are fewer ranks to strive for and less to work towards—they are leaving to use their skills elsewhere. Companies need to shift their culture away from the traditional emphasis on promotion to avoid disaster (p. 7). Walker stated that management can ameliorate the effects of fewer advancement opportunities by encouraging lateral moves (p. 207).

Mentorship

Moore and Salimbene (1981) defined mentorship as "an intense, lasting, and professionally centered relationship between two individuals in which the more experienced and powerful individual, the mentor, guides, advises, and assists in any number of ways the career of the less experienced, often younger, upwardly mobile protégé" (p. 52). Johnsrud identified other labels that surround mentoring. These include patron, role model, sponsor, coach, and advisor. These are terms used to refer to persons who have provided some sort of career assistance (p. 59).

Kram (1985) and Noe (1988, cited in Summers-Ewing, 1994) claimed that

> there are two types of mentors: formal and informal. A formal mentor is one who has been designated specifically for the purpose of facilitating less experienced colleagues' advancement and development. Examples of this type of relationship include: graduate student-advisor, subordinate-manager, or protégé-executive. . . . The outcome of such a relationship is presumed to benefit the protégé in their subsequent career progress and success, while the organization gains a seasoned and competent executive. (p. 1)

Kram (1985) and Noe (1988, cited in Summers-Ewing, 1994) contrasted informal mentoring to formal by stating that "an informal mentor is someone who provides mentoring functions because they derive personal satisfaction or some type of intrinsic benefit from the mentoring relationship. Older peers, research colleagues, or senior executives could be examples of this type of association" (p. 2). Noe identified through research that "the majority of mentoring relationships are informal" (p. 2).

Kram (1985, cited in Summers-Ewing, 1994) claimed that psychosocial and career functions are two broad categories of mentoring. Psychosocial includes those aspects that enhance a protégé's sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness. These functions are based on a close interpersonal relationship that fosters mutual trust (p. 2). In addition, Kram explained that career functions are those aspects of the mentoring relationship that enhance career advancement as a result of the mentor's experience, sponsorship, protection, and influence. This includes (a) sponsorship, (b) coaching, (c)

provision of exposure and visibility, and (d) challenging work assignments (p. 2). Noe (1988, cited in Summers-Ewing, 1994) stated that "ideally, the 'best' mentoring relationships combine both psychosocial and career functions" (p. 3).

Protégés can also have multiple mentors, formal and informal, to provide the spectrum of functions desired. Henderson and Welch (1993) claimed that "in business and higher education the person at the highest level was also the person with the most mentors. In both of these cases, the highest-ranking person named six mentors" (p. 8). Henderson and Welch also said that sponsorship was a factor in higher education. In other words, sponsorship was a role that was assumed by their protégés' mentors. Therefore, the importance of the mentor as a sponsor in higher education was confirmed (p. 10). As well, "there was less prevalent use of critical feedback in higher education. Instead, primary subjects cited the influence of mentors in identifying the appropriate venues (e.g., conferences and journals) within which to present their work. . . . In both business/industry and higher education, however, the quantity of mentors appeared to be more important than the quality of the relationships" (pp. 14-15). "Everyone who was promoted to the highest administrative levels of their organizations had larger numbers of mentors, and those at the very top had more mentoring experience than those at the second highest levels did" (p. 10). However, "subjects receiving mentorship saw mentorship as an important, but not critical, factor in their advancement" (p. 8).

Secondments

According to Webster's dictionary (Gave, 1986), a *secondment* is defined as the detachment of a person from his regular organization for temporary assignment elsewhere (p. 2051). A seconded person develops new knowledge and skills while providing a needed service to the temporary organization. Hall (1986) categorized temporary assignments as an environmental method of learning because it places a

person in a different environment to acquire new knowledge. This type of program can be used in the development plan in a succession planning process because it includes a "broadening" or "development" assignment in another department or division or a temporary assignment. However, this program requires more thought in planning because it is used inappropriately and it is under utilized (p. 255).

Succession Planning in Secondary Education

The topic of succession planning in secondary education was briefly discussed by Stelck (1997) and Miklos (1988). The focus in these articles was primarily on the advancement of teachers to principals and principals to superintendents. Stelck described a program called the District's Administrator for Tomorrow Program for teachers aspiring to principalships. Stelck claimed that it was created in response to a perceived need "to prepare those people who were interested in administration with skills, knowledge and attitudes that would be necessary to do the job of administration." In addition, the Program served a very practical aim that demographic trends indicated that there was going to be a large demand for new administrators in the near future. Underlying this purpose was a concern that there was a lack of qualified candidates for administrative positions, thus forcing the system to be a "little more proactive in that area"- the identification and recruitment of potential administrators. Therefore, one very tangible aim of the Program was to establish a "talent pool" from which to select future administrators (p. 16).

Miklos (1988) explained that "an assumption underlying the research on administrative succession is that a change of administrators is a significant event in the history of an organization" (p. 63). He pointed to Miskel and Cosgrove (1985), who proposed a "framework to guide the study of leader succession" (p. 89). This included the areas of prearrival factors (reason for succession and selection process), arrival

factors (school culture and educational programs), and succession effects (changes in reputations and orientation of leaders) (p. 89).

Miskel and Cosgrove (1985) described *prearrival factors* as "a set of events that occurs before the arrival and entrance of the successor into the situation" (p. 88). For example, reasons for succession can include death, illness, promotion, demotion, or dismissal. This results in one of two situations. On the one hand, accumulated knowledge by a predecessor is passed on and a stabilizing influence is found. On the other hand, discontinuity occurs with rapid and extreme policy changes (p. 89).

In the selection process, Miskel and Cosgrove (1985) claimed that future leaders may be insiders, meaning they are hired from within the school, or they are outsiders or successors hired from an entirely different organization (p. 90). Birnbaum (1971) claimed that colleges and universities use a selection process that reduces the conflict of training several people to fill future vacancies. Therefore, a successor is found from the academic community who has comparable socializing experiences and who would facilitate a smooth transition to the new leader. Recruiting dissimilar leaders leads to new knowledge and skills and acts as a catalyst for innovation in the organization. In-breeding encourages traditionalism and shows a reluctance to explore new methodologies and the weakened ability to attract students (p. 144). Rothen (1994) reported in the Canadian College CEO Survey that, historically, 81% of CEOs (Presidents) have been selected from outside the college they administer (p. 3).

In explaining arrival factors, such as school culture and education programs, Miskel and Cosgrove (1985) claimed that "a second set of events occurs once the new leader had taken office and began to act" (p. 88). For example in reference to school culture, Gordon and Rosen (1981) found that outside successors did not have the necessary sources of information needed to manage their groups. An explanation of this is that the combination of authority and strangeness inhibited important informal

communications that could provide information about the culture in the group or organization (p. 247). However, networks of communication can change as a new leader in an organization becomes more and more familiar with the new setting.

Lastly, according to Miskel and Cosgrove (1985), the area of *succession effects* deals with the changes to prearrival and arrival factors that are expected to vary as the result of changing administrators. This suggests that a leader's succession is associated with changes in the reputation and orientation of the new administration and arrival factors of school culture and educational programs. In other words, succession effects consist of modifications in the prearrival and arrival factors that can be attributed to changing administration (p. 100).

External Environmental Forces

External environmental forces include competition, demographics, economics, politics, technology, and trends of learning organizations. Walker (1992) observed, as did Greer, Jackson, and Fiorito (1989) and Ulrich (1989), that problems brought about by these environmental forces represent opportunities for change from the current situation. These changes show how a company may achieve or enhance a competitive edge (p. 27). In other words, problems can be viewed as opportunities. For example, Greer, Jackson, and Fiorito addressed the importance of adapting human resource planning to the environmental change (p. 106), and Ulrich emphasized the importance of going beyond customer satisfaction to customer commitment (p. 19). Furthermore, in terms of demographics, the aging management population is retiring and creating an "experience gap." This has been triggered by downsizing of the organization. Walker's comments on demographic change echoed this sentiment. He stated that

> in the 1960s and 1980s, it was a buyer's market for talent. There was ample talent in the work force, fed by new entrants in the baby boom bulge of the population. In the 1990s and beyond, entry-level is scarce; and the work force, like the population, is aging. The combination of these factors will result in shortages of talent in many areas. Companies

> need to act creatively to ensure that they will attract, retain, and effectively manage the talent they need. (p. 45)

Walker (1992) also addressed downsizing and its effects on management by stating that "companies are striving to make their organizations flatter, resulting in broader scope responsibilities to management at all levels. Middle management is redefined to take on more responsibility for translating strategy into operational plans" (p. 42). Even though organizations are becoming smaller in terms of "people" power, customers still have high expectations of quality. In this frame of reference, he stated that

> organizations need to be leaner and more flexible as well. They may resemble a network, with a blend of hierarchy, entrepreneurial units, and decentralized structure. The aim is to increase the capacity to act swiftly, creatively, and efficiently to meet customer need or competitive challenges. More work is performed through ad hoc teams involving people from different groups. The distinction between staff and line blurs. (p. 42)

Walker highlighted this point further by stating that "the emphasis will be on the abilities, skills, and performance of employees who satisfy customer needs 100% every time" (p. 25). Also, in education, Darling-Hammond (1988) identified efficiency as desirable both to safeguard taxpayers' pocketbooks and to ensure that educational programs achieve their desired effects for their customers (p. 63).

Having a technological edge is vital for survival. Walker (1992) stated that the "introduction of advanced technology in an organization provides only a temporary competitive advantage, as other organizations quickly achieve parity by catching up. It is effective application of the technology—the productively through people—yields an advantage" (p. 39).

Lastly, trends also affect organizations. Walker (1992) stated that organizations need to collect and examine data on future trends and changes. This is important so that relevant information is not missed, resulting in adverse impact to the organization (p. 26). Today's trends in learning organizations, which include leadership training and

total quality management, could affect the concept of succession planning. Leadership training and total quality management need to be considered when studying succession planning in the 1990s. For example, Dilworth (1995) stated that the learning organization encourages two streams of thought: the continuous process of learning and the continuous process of improvement (p. 255). It strives to develop leaders who continuously learn in a culture that incorporates quality initiatives in its organization. This is necessary for survival in today's changing environment. The concept of succession planning aids in this process by developing quality leaders for the future. Overall, external environmental forces affect how organizations set future objectives and goals.

Internal Environmental Forces

Internal environmental forces include culture, bureaucracy, and politics. Culture in an organization sets the stage for how the organization is run. Walker (1992) stated that "culture is a powerful competitive weapon. When people share common values and beliefs, and live by common norms of behavior, they can achieve outstanding results" (p. 116). On the other hand, Walker asserted that

> culture is an obstacle to change when it is not aligned with strategy. When there are different sets of values and different norms for behavior, there is a lack of integration that undermines strategic focus, consistent service to customers, and teamwork. (p. 116)

He, therefore, concluded that

> these explicit and implicit cultures need to be integrated, or made consistent. Otherwise, the organization will end up with two separate cultures: the explicit culture, emphasized by management, and the implicit culture, reflected in the behavior of people in the organization. (p. 116)

Miner and Estler (1985) felt that in many higher educational institutions,

> the boundary between senior (faculty) administrators and "regular" staff is nearly impermeable. Thus, no staff employee would realistically aspire to any post for which faculty membership is fundamental. Although this boundary on mobility is well known, little else is known

> about the feasible job progressions for staff, whether through formal ladders or informal tradition. (p. 122)

Bureaucracies have their pros and cons; Walker (1992) stated that "flexible HR [human resources] functions aggressively seek to be perceived as 'bureaucracy busters,' setting an example for other staff functions and line organizations" (p. 318). Mintzberg (1979) asserted that education uses "professional bureaucracy," which allows its highly trained professionals a large amount of control over their work and interactions with clients. The standards of the organization are maintained through loyalty to self-governing associations that the professionals join; power is held through demonstration of expertise (p. 349). In addition, Schlechty (1988) remarked that

> school systems, like most public organizations, are predicated on the assumption of program maintenance and certainty. Budgets are categorical and drawn up on an annual basis. As in most bureaucracies, job descriptions are precise and constraining. Doing things is more important than study things and acting is more valued than thinking. (p. 198)

According to Darling-Hammond (1988), the rationale for bureaucratic control of teaching is that public policy makers do not trust teachers to make responsible judgments, to act capably, and to perform adequately in preparation and supervision (p. 63). This stands in stark contrast to the premise of Total Quality Management (TQM) and Continuous Quality Initiative (CQI), where problem solving is conducted by consultative teams, thinking is essential, and trust exists within the organization. Wood (1995) stated that restructuring education's workplaces must be guided by (a) synthesis and thinking, (b) teaming and participation, and (c) organization learning (p. 405). In this way, bureaucratic structure could be reduced.

With reference to teams and succession planning, Rothwell (1994) claimed that the implications of teams for succession planning are significant because teams build cross-functional expertise by (potentially) giving nonmanagement employees experience in managerial work (p. 287). Furthermore, he saw the benefits of teams and succession

planning. Teams can function as talent pools for succession planning in which many individuals have been cross-trained on different jobs. Also, as team members in self-directed teams absorb supervisory duties, supervisory positions are eliminated. However, this results in increasing the need to conduct supervisory training because many workers enter the potential talent pool for advancement to management with a lack of management skills. In addition, the leadership knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by executives should change dramatically in a team environment. Instead of directing supervisors, executives must master the new skills of inspiring, leading by example, questioning, and coaching (p. 288). Therefore, teams help to establish potential talent pools in succession planning, and workers in the organization have an opportunity to learn by participating on team projects; thus, the desire to learn and grow is self-directed by team participation.

In summary, Schlechty (1988) claimed that in managing change in schools, strategy is more important than tactics, and a clear vision is important. However, tactics must be flexible to accommodate change in a constantly altering environment.

Conceptual Framework

From the review of the literature, a conceptual framework (Figure 1) for succession planning was developed. In an analysis of the framework, the major components that comprise the structure include the areas of (a) "inputs" or resources that make succession planning possible; (b) "process" or the forms of succession planning, which include administrative internship programs, employee exchange programs, formal training programs, job rotation, lateral job movements, mentorship, and secondments. These forms are evaluated, adapted, and used according to influencing internal and external environmental forces; and (c) "outputs" or the succession planning process that contributes to the value of the individuals and the

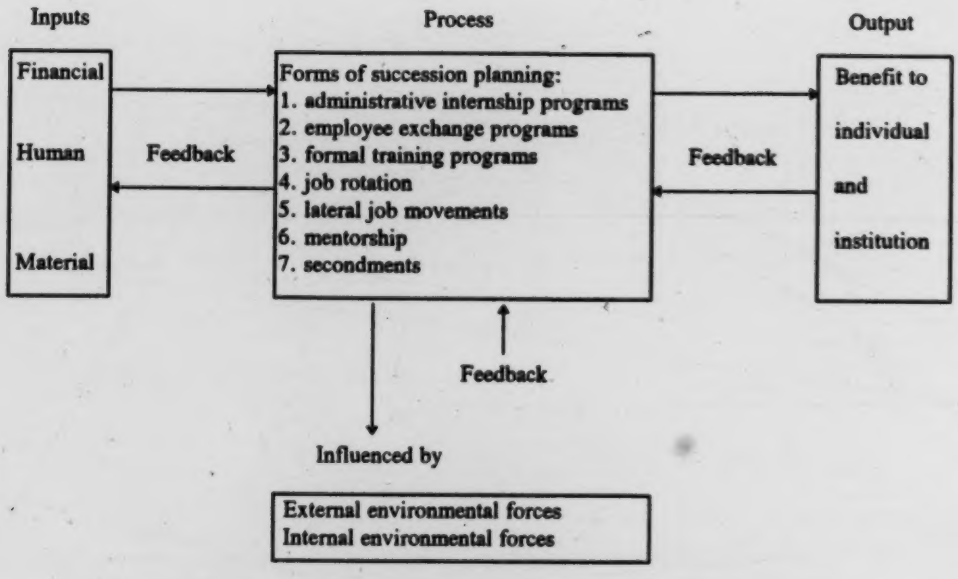


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for succession planning.

institution. Also, feedback loops link all of these components so that the various forms of succession planning can be continuously improved.

Inputs

Inputs include financial, human, and material resources. First of all, the term *financial* refers to the dollar commitment to succession planning by the organization. The premise is that the process has value for the organization. Second, *human resources* refers to investing in the organization's management staff so that they can have the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve organizational objectives. This also includes acknowledging the individual's characteristics and the organization's characteristics so that there is a fit with both their needs. Lastly, *material* refers to technological advances such as computer software programs that are used to simplify the process of keeping up to date with staffing needs and changes.

Process and Influencing Environmental Forces

Process refers to the forms of succession planning that include administrative internship programs, employee exchange programs, formal training programs, job rotations, lateral job movements, mentorship, and secondments. These are tools that can be used to gain knowledge and practical experience; these are part of the "bigger picture" of career development for management staff. These forms of succession planning are influenced by external environmental forces such as demographics, economics, competition, technology, and trends such as learning organizations; and internal environmental forces such as culture, politics, and bureaucracy. This means that some of these forms may appear more important given current trends or are more useable by certain organizational cultures. For example, in today's trend of learning organizations, job rotation is viewed as important because it promotes continuous learning in organizations. In this frame of reference, job rotations are used to develop individuals because vertical movement is limited today. Also, mentorship is important in certain organizational cultures. Here, mentorship helps to prepare management staff for other positions by developing a "trust" between individuals in different levels of experience. Subsequently, these forms increase or decrease in use according to the changing needs of employees and their organization.

Outputs

Outputs are the benefits to (a) management staff who are part of the succession planning process, and (b) the organization that has adopted this process. Advantages to management staff include the opportunities of being assessed, developed, and evaluated according to their needs and the needs of the organization; whereas advantages to the institution include developing a "talent pool" of staff who could capably lead the organization into the future.

Feedback

Also, all of these components are tied together by feedback for revision and improvement of the inputs, processes, and outputs as people and organizational needs change. In addition, this helps in evaluating whether desired outcomes are achieved for the employees and the organization.

Conclusion

The conceptual framework for succession planning indicates whether inputs and processes are adequate so that the intended outputs are achieved. In other words, the conceptual framework summarizes how the inputs and processes help to generate the output of the succession planning process.

Summary

Succession planning is a process that helps individuals to develop through mentorship, training, and enrichment in order to prepare them for future job advancements. This process is used primarily by corporate business institutions, although some school jurisdictions are also implementing programs to address succession. The primary approaches identified in succession planning literature include administrative internship programs, employee exchange programs, formal training programs, job rotation, lateral job movements, mentorship, and secondments. Some researchers have investigated succession planning at the secondary education level; however, at the postsecondary educational level the amount of research conducted to date is extremely limited. Nevertheless, the concept can no longer be ignored in postsecondary educational institutions because key administrators are vacating positions due to downsizing, early retirements, and mandatory retirements. Therefore, a carefully thought out strategy for managing the resource of people in planning and career development for the 1990s is crucial. In this way, institutions can have strategic plans for managing their most valuable and expensive resource. Only those institutions

that actively plan for succession can remain competitive in an ever-changing environment.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method for this study was designed to gain an understanding of how management personnel in one organization perceive the concept of succession planning as a means of career development. The components discussed in this section include (a) design, (b) population and sample, (c) consent, (d) data collection, (e) data analyses, (f) pilot study, and (g) threats to validity.

Research Problem

Prior to designing the research method, the research problem was reviewed to ensure that a fit existed between the two areas. The aim of the study was to identify the forms of succession planning perceived by management staff to be effective for career development at the Institute. Sub-problems that arose from the research problem included (a) management staff perceptions of career success, (b) special training and programs available in progressing to other positions, (c) other programs required in assisting management staff to advance, and (d) mechanisms that would assist management staff in progressing within the Institute.

Design

Because the term *succession planning* is not well researched or explained in the educational environment, it is not surprising that educational management staff lack clear knowledge and understanding of this concept. Even though the concept of succession planning is applied indirectly in practice, this label is rarely used. Therefore, in order to help clarify terms and develop a foundation of understanding, the need for a descriptive study using a naturalistic interpretive inquiry was necessary. To address this need, a case study research method using an anecdotal approach was used. This permitted gaining knowledge regarding how succession planning was

perceived at the Institute. To obtain a preliminary assessment of the viability of the study, a pilot was conducted; this is described in detail near the end of this chapter.

Population and Sample

The target population included any management staff member who occupied a management or supervisory position in the Institute. This comprised senior officials, deans, and team leaders from any division or department. The accessible population included management staff members from specific divisions within the Institute who were willing to participate in the study. A sample of six informants was purposefully selected. These people were chosen to fit into one of three categories. The first category included two people whom I perceived to be successful executive management staff and who were retiring within the next year. The second category of selection included two executive management staff members who have successfully advanced within the Institute. Finally, two staff members who were aspiring to advance within the organizational structure were selected. Also, because of a "snowball effect," one additional person who fit into the second category was added to the main study, giving a total of seven participants for the main study.

Consent and Confidentiality

Subjects were requested to participate in the study by a letter outlining (a) the purpose of the study, (b) the interview process, (c) the time frame of the interviews, (d) the interview questions, and (e) the priority given to protecting the participants from any harm as a result of the study. This last point was reinforced by gaining ethics approval from the University of Alberta before conducting the study. The issues of protecting the participant in terms of anonymity, confidentiality, and the choice of "leaving" the study at any point were emphasized (see Appendix A). Consent was obtained verbally. Voluntary and informed consent from the participants was attained prior to conducting the interviews.

Data Collection

The interviews were conducted during the month of April 1997. Data were collected using a semistructured interview approach (see Appendix B). The interviews were conducted by myself and recorded on audiotape. Also, notes were taken during the interviews regarding key points of information and the participants' nonverbal communication. The interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 2 hours in length. After each interview was conducted, summary notes were made in an ongoing journal regarding my perceptions of the interview. Each interview was transcribed using a verbatim approach. This meant that all the verbal stutters and "ums" were included. Also, the transcripts of the interviews were returned to the respondents for feedback on the accuracy of the information collected. Those comments that were quoted in this document as supporting evidence have been edited only for grammatical purposes. Particular attention was paid to maintaining the integrity of the meaning of what was said.

Data Analysis

The transcripts were analyzed and coded using both deductive and inductive approaches. These processes generated the findings for the study. To minimize the effects of researcher bias at this stage, the preliminary analyses were shared with a critical colleague who followed an audit trail and corroborated my interpretations. This audit trail included sharing, discussing, and confirming findings, analyses, and responses to the research problem and the sub-problems with the colleague. This process ensured intersubjective agreement between myself and my "critical peer."

Deductive Analysis

Deductive analysis of the data drew on both succession planning and career development literature and my own experience with succession planning at the Institute. As a result, this personal knowledge and research base was used to generate themes for

categories related to the topics addressed in the sub-problems. A deductive approach to content analysis was used, with the sub-problems being viewed as the coding frames for the analysis of the data gathered. In this frame of reference, data that were obtained through the interviews were coded according to themes addressed in the sub-problems. These findings are outlined and described in Chapter Four. Also, meaning was given to these findings by placing the results of these data in context with what the participants had said in response to the interview questions.

Inductive Analysis

Inductive data analysis was the second approach used to make sense of the participants' interviews. The data in the transcripts were examined to identify emerging themes and patterns. The objective was then to interpret and to comment on the data. First of all, themes were used as the unit of analysis. These resulted from scrutinizing the data in the interviews and categorizing the ideas into common themes. The notion of open coding (Berg, 1995) was used in this process. In the second step, the concept of axial coding or developing coding frames was used (Berg, 1995). Here, common themes were reorganized into superordinate categories. This process involved identifying key phrases in the transcript, developing summary notes from these points, and analyzing this information to develop the themes and supercategories of themes. This led to confirming a fit between data and existing theory on succession planning.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in the early part of 1997 to test the interview questions and to undergo the process of preliminary data analysis. This provided me with the opportunity to go through a "dress rehearsal" in preparing to conduct the "main" study.

The pilot study component of testing the semistructured interview questions was conducted in two phases. The first phase involved interviewing a retired postsecondary

administrator who had extensive experience in various management positions at different postsecondary educational institutions. The second phase involved interviewing a management staff member from the Institute. Both of these experiences allowed the opportunity to help refine the interview schedule design in terms of rephrasing questions, adding or deleting questions, identifying biased questions, and checking the flow of the questions. Also, the interview process helped test the effectiveness of the interview. It also verified a "fit" between the research problem and the information obtained from the interview.

Prior to this process the interview schedule had undergone a number of changes since its original format outlined in the proposal (see Appendix C). These changes resulted from discussions with graduate-student peers and with the first pilot interviewee. Therefore, questions were fine-tuned prior to the first pilot interview (see Appendix D) and after the pilot interview. This process resulted in the final interview schedule for the main study (see Appendix B). Important shortcomings of the interview schedule were identified after the first pilot interview. These changes occurred after "experiencing the questions" during the interview and from the discussion that occurred after the respondent's interview. Lastly, the session was closed with a request for any additional thoughts or advice. This enabled the respondents to comment on any issues that had not been considered in the conceptualization of this study.

The first pilot respondent also suggested that five additional questions be added to the schedule. First, *"Did you receive any encouragement to advance in the organization?"* This question extended the participants' thoughts on whether success could be attributed to mentoring or the culture of the organization and also served as a check on the reliability of responses to questions 4, 9, and 10 (see Appendix B). Second, *"Would you say there is a climate or culture in the organization for succession planning?"* This question served the purpose of finding out whether the environment in

the organization supported the concept of preparing management staff for other job positions and career development. This was important because the culture reflected the mind-set of the organization. Third, *"Does the Institute's quality initiative fit with succession planning?"* The Continuous Quality Initiative (CQI) was a priority at the Institute; one of the mandates of the CQI model was to embed quality principles in the organization's operations. Human resource management was one of the areas in the operation's structure. Therefore, the concept of succession planning can be considered as a means of quality improvement for this area. Fourth, *"Is this what is needed to succeed in today's environment of restructuring, downsizing, and change?"* This question extended the answer on what is happening at postsecondary educational institutions today. And fifth, *"How has the restructuring of the organization affected your career development?"* This question further probed the two answers already given in question 6 by asking on a personal level how the participant has been affected by the organization's restructuring. It also acted as a check for questions 2, 3, 4, and 5 (see Appendix B).

The respondent in phase 2 of the pilot did not make any changes to the interview schedule after being interviewed. As a result, I felt that the quality of the questions was acceptable for use in the main study.

The interactive process of the pilot interview in phase 1 and phase 2 required the need for some refining for future interviews. First of all, the need to build rapport with the participant before the interview was crucial. This helped to develop a relationship between the respondent and me. These "opening" questions were created with the respondent in mind. Secondly, the importance of observing nonverbal communication such as gestures, posture, and body movements was critical. According to Mehrabian (1968, cited in Huseman, Stockmayer, Lahiff, & Hatfield, 1984), "Our words convey a very small part of the message." He argued that "93 percent of the

total impact of any given message consists of nonverbal factors" (p. 33). As a result, this nonverbal communication reflected comfort, anxiety, or other feelings that the respondent was experiencing during the interview. This signaled the need for me to adapt the questions accordingly or note that the answers did not fit with the emotions. Thirdly, the importance of maintaining focus on the respondent's answers and not wanting to interject and tell my story was important. Lastly, allowing "silences" to occur so that the respondent could add further information to a question was very useful. This meant giving the respondent time to think before answering the questions.

The pilot study component of the data analysis incorporated deductive and inductive approaches, which allowed for the analysis and synthesis of data based on identifying emerging themes from the interviews.

Validity, Reliability, and Objectivity

Obtaining a high degree of validity, reliability, and objectivity is more difficult in naturalistic research because the researcher does not control external influences that may affect the study. Guba (1978, cited in Patton, 1980) defined *naturalistic inquiry* as "a 'discovery-oriented' approach which minimizes investigator manipulation of the study setting and places no prior constraints on what the outcomes of the research will be" (p. 42). In addition, Smith and Glass (1987) claimed that although naturalistic methods became more acceptable in the late 1970s, many researchers feel that they lack reliability, validity, and the controls that are built into quantitative methods (p. 255). Therefore, the researcher must acknowledge possible threats to validity, reliability, and objectivity that may exist in the study. According to Eichelberger (1989), this translates into addressing the trustworthiness of the evidence (p. 154).

Validity

To begin with, *construct validity* was enhanced by pilot testing the interview questions. According to Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996), "Construct validity is the extent to which a particular test can be shown to assess the construct that it purports to measure" (p. 249). In the present research, the pilot study included two people who were not part of the main study. The purpose of this process was to "test" the interview process. In this way, interview questions were reviewed to eliminate ambiguity and to identify threatening questions.

Through the use of various strategies, internal validity was achieved in the interviewing process. *Internal validity* was defined by Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) as "the degree to which research findings can be distorted by extraneous variables " (p. 634). To lessen the distortion of extraneous variables in the study, first of all, the interview instrument was developed by consulting the literature on instrument development and acquiring feedback from knowledgeable individuals and peers. Second, the quality of the interviews was a concern because of the potential for informants to withhold information from a peer. However, developing a rapport with the respondents prior to and during the interviews and using probing questions helped to overcome this barrier. Third, copies of the transcripts were returned to the respondents for feedback—a confirmability audit. Here, the content of the transcripts was confirmed by the respondents to be accurate and true. This led to credibility in establishing the genuineness of the findings. Fourth, care was taken to ensure my credibility. This was augmented by my professional behavior and by careful regard for confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents and the organization. Lastly, assurances of confidentiality and anonymity were given verbally and in writing to the respondents. In addition, interview transcribing was conducted by myself and a

professional transcriber, who understood the importance of confidentiality and anonymity.

External validity refers to the transferability of the findings to other postsecondary technical institutions. Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) defined external validity as "the extent to which the findings of a case study can be generalized to similar cases" (p. 572). In this study external validity was of less concern. Ensuring transferability was much more important. To enhance transferability, the descriptions obtained regarding career development and succession planning were "thick." In reference to organizational content, the findings may be transferable to other areas in the organization that was studied. For example, this may include the support area of operations. Smith and Glass (1987) added to this area further when they discussed naturalistic studies and stated that

> the only safe basis of generalizing is by careful logical analysis about the similarities and differences between the sample in the study and the other group. In this way the basis for generalizing from a case study is the same as the basis for generalizing from an experiment. Knowledge builds up gradually, and theories based on data are judged to be adequate only to the extent to which they can account for the data at hand. (p. 257)

Hence, even though the study contributed a new perspective on the topic of career development for management staff in a postsecondary technical educational institution, transferability claims were limited to the institution studied.

Reliability

Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) defined *reliability* as "the extent to which other researchers would arrive at similar results if they studied the same case using exactly the same procedures as the first researcher" (p. 572). However, in qualitative studies this becomes problematic. According to Patton (1980), "Qualitative designs are naturalistic in that the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the research setting. . . . The point of qualitative methods is to understand naturally occurring phenomena in

their naturally occurring states" (p. 41). In addition, Smith and Glass (1987) stated that "naturalistic researchers do not intervene in the existing flow of events, but study them as they are, as they exist in nature, in a sense" (p. 253). As a result, replication of the research is more difficult to achieve. Steps taken to enhance the reliability of this study included (a) developing an acceptable interview schedule (b) pilot-testing the interview questions; and (c) establishing an audit trail—and having a colleague follow it—which included compiling a journal of my thoughts and perceptions throughout the study, conducting a thorough literature review, and developing comprehensive records on data collection, analyses, findings, and conclusions. Owens (1982) explained that "an audit trail consists of deliberately leaving sufficient evidence so that someone external to the inquiry could review the process and results of the inquiry and ascertain whether the processes were appropriate and the results were reasonable and credible" (p. 13).

Objectivity

Lastly, the possibility of researcher bias when interpreting results existed. This problem was reduced by utilizing a critical peer to ensure intersubjective agreement to reduce the effects of bias. This was accomplished by sharing, with a critical colleague, findings derived from deductive and inductive analyses; the colleague followed an audit trail and corroborated my interpretations. The process required the colleague to read two transcripts and inductively identify emergent themes. In this way the veracity of my categories was assessed. Also, by means of deductive analysis, the main research problem and the sub-problems were reviewed and discussed. The respondents were also asked to read and verify their transcripts. The combination of these strategies helped to enhance the objectivity of the study.

Summary

This chapter restated the research problem and described how a case study research method using an anecdotal approach was utilized. The research design was outlined and a description of the population and sample provided. As a result, this naturalistic inquiry assisted in gaining knowledge on how succession planning was perceived by nine postsecondary educational institution management staff individuals—two in the pilot study and seven in the main study. These reflections provided a "thick" description of the experiences of management staff with succession planning. Also, validity, reliability, and objectivity issues were discussed as they related to the interview process. The findings, supported by the data gathered from the respondents, are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

This chapter describes the findings obtained from the data collected in this study. The analysis is presented in two sections: (a) findings from the pilot study, and (b) findings from the main study. As a reminder to the reader, the chapter commences with statements of the research problem, the sub-problems, and the method.

Research Problem

The research problem was to identify forms of succession planning perceived by management staff to be effective for career development at a postsecondary educational institute of technology in Western Canada.

Sub-Problems

Emerging from the general research problem were four sub-questions:

1. What factors do management staff perceive to have contributed to the success of their careers at the Institute?

2. Are management staff work offered any special training or programs to assist them in progressing within the organization?

3. What programs would be helpful in assisting management staff to progress to other positions within the Institute?

4. What mechanisms are seen to have potential for helping management staff to progress to other positions within the Institute?

Method

A case study research method using an anecdotal approach was utilized. This resulted in an interpretative research study using naturalistic inquiry techniques to gather perceptions regarding how career development and succession planning were perceived by management staff at the Institute.

Pilot Study Findings

For the purpose of the pilot study, two management staff members, Howard and Dan, who worked in postsecondary educational institutions were interviewed. Specifically, Howard worked in various management capacities in different postsecondary educational institutions, whereas Dan worked in various supervisory and management positions at the Institute. Also, to ensure their confidentially, pseudonyms were used. As the data were analyzed, both deductively and inductively, themes emerged. The deductive and inductive analyses are addressed below.

Deductive Analysis

In this process, data obtained through the interviews were thematically coded according to the study's sub-problems. These findings are outlined and described in this section. Also, meaning was given to these findings by placing the results of these data in context with the participants' responses to the interview questions. This meant recording responses in the study according to the interview questions for specific information.

Perceptions of personal career success. The first theme presenting itself from deductive analysis focused on "what personal career success in a postsecondary educational environment meant to the respondents." According to the respondents, the perception of career success came from four main areas. First of all, the perception of success came from having a "diverse background." This meant having opportunities to work in a number of different management positions, as well as "having the authority" to develop new programs, "getting the opportunity" to be innovative, "working in an organization" that was growing, being offered job opportunities, and being provided with feedback on performance. Furthermore, according to Dan, this related to "being born at the right time" and beating the influx of baby boomers. Second, success was tied to "pride" in "bringing about change" by improving and building upon what was

already available in the educational structure. Third, success was perceived as being "lucky at a young age" because a mentor offered opportunities to work with a team that created new policies, and the concept of leadership was introduced. Fourth, success was perceived as "personal satisfaction." For the respondents this meant meeting people, traveling, seeing students succeed, having success "snowball," enjoying the work, giving opportunities to other staff members, receiving positive feedback, and generating a consistently high quality of work. In summary, the respondents felt that the main reason for being successful had to do with being "at the right place at the right time."

The perception of success came from being "at the right place at the right time" to seize job opportunities which were ample due to (a) organizational growth and (b) being born before the volume and competition of the "baby boomers" came into the job market. For Howard it came from having opportunities at a young age when the "taste" of success, growth, and challenge set the stage for further desires for success. For Dan a quality of lifestyle was made available that fit with his personal goals. Also, these feelings complemented the intrinsic qualities of enjoying working with people, traveling, and seeing others succeed in their efforts. In addition, continual growth reflected working in diverse positions where different roles offered the respondents authority and power to make decisions. This was all possible in an environment that promoted a mind-set of learning and growth. The perception of success came from timeliness, personal qualities, and a culture that promoted growth.

Progression training and programs. The second theme that evolved from the deductive analysis centered on the "availability of special training and programs to assist management staff in progressing within the postsecondary educational system." The first respondent, Howard, identified "preservice training" in teaching as important because as a noneducator working in an educational environment, this was crucial

knowledge. Also, this knowledge "set the ball in motion" to acquire baccalaureate, magistral, and doctoral degrees from a university Faculty of Education. The "environment" of the postsecondary institution encouraged this type of formal training.

On the other hand, the second respondent, Dan, believed that in an academic environment individuals start and remain instructors for the rest of their careers. He further claimed that the culture of postsecondary technical institutions is for individuals to have careers as teachers and to become more knowledgeable in their areas of expertise. Learning means becoming more knowledgeable in your area of specialty and being able to disseminate this information to your students. In an academic environment, instruction is the prime purpose of the organization. For most instructors teaching is a chosen lifestyle; instructors enjoy what they do, and they do not aspire to administrative positions. Even though preservice training, education leaves, secondments, and industrial leaves are available, they are not seen as a means to groom individuals to senior level positions. The culture is not to develop individuals to senior-level positions as in the private sector.

It appears that working in an educational environment sets the stage for obtaining further education. Postsecondary technical institutions offer preservice training in teaching technical staff or noneducators how to teach their "craft." This is important because postsecondary technical institutions primarily hire individuals with industry experience rather than individuals who are educated as teachers. However, once in the educational system, these individuals extend their knowledge by gaining skills in teaching in order to become more proficient educators in their areas of expertise. This may eventually snowball to acquiring more formal education through university courses. Therefore, the educational environment encourages staff to become better teachers, but it does not appear to offer any special training or programs to assist them in progressing to management positions within the organization.

Job movement programs. The third theme that evolved from the deductive analysis was the "identification of programs to assist management staff to progress to other positions within the educational institution." Howard believed that "the combination of theory and practice" assists management staff to progress. For example, he explained that university training, executive leadership courses in a formal training program capacity, and ongoing inservice training are important for theoretical knowledge. Also, ensuring that staff have opportunities to attend conferences to network, share ideas, and develop liaisons with members of other postsecondary educational institutions is essential. This encourages developing a practical way of using other people's experiences in devising solutions for problems. Finally, Howard pointed out that "people aspiring to higher positions in an organization must be assertive. This means knowing what is available, searching for opportunities, becoming known, and showing interest. People are not going to search you out." In addition, Dan claimed that the personal traits of "EQ," or emotional intelligence, empathy, flexibility, and adaptability are important. Overall, this combination assists management staff to progress.

In an analysis of the findings it became apparent that management staff need a combination of theoretical knowledge, practical experience, and certain personality traits to progress to other positions. In the area of theory they appear to benefit from having a university education, executive leadership programs, and inservice training. In the area of practice the opportunity to attend conferences for brainstorming, networking, and exchanging ideas with colleagues is vital. The need for discussing problems from different perspectives helps to draw a "bigger picture" of understanding. This includes an exchange of ideas with staff members of local, national, and international postsecondary educational institutions. In order to achieve the above, management staff need a blend of personality traits, including assertiveness

in searching out opportunities for continuing their education, attending conferences, and becoming known in the organization. Also, the personal traits of empathy, flexibility, and adaptability are important. As a result, a combination of these various components is required for success in the Institute.

Job progression programs. The fourth theme that evolved from the deductive analysis identified "mechanisms that would be the most effective for management staff to use to progress to other positions within the postsecondary technical institution." In the process of acquiring this feedback, a list of these mechanisms was given to the respondents for their assessment. These included the areas of (a) administrative internship programs, (b) employee exchange programs, (c) formal training programs, (d) job rotation, (e) lateral job movements, (f) mentorship, and (g) secondments. Also, a list of definitions of each mechanism was given for clarity. Feedback on each of these areas was given in terms of advantages and disadvantages (see Table 1). According to the respondents, the most beneficial mechanisms in helping management staff to progress were formal training programs, administrative internship programs, and job rotation, based on the need for extending management staff's education in order to get a broad understanding of postsecondary technical educational institutions in formal training programs. This also included allowing them to "experience the position" in an administrative internship program and to "gain a broad base" of experience from job rotation programs.

In an analysis of these findings, the mechanisms of administrative internship programs, employee exchange programs, job rotation, lateral job movements, and secondments can be seen as a means of gaining practical experience in understanding how postsecondary technical institutions function. This complements the theoretical knowledge that is gained through formal education in universities, informal course study through inservice training, and mentorship. Each mechanism has strengths and

Table 1

Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Various Forms of Succession Planning (Pilot Study)

Program	Advantages	Disadvantages
Administrative internship	• Allows for a facsimile of real-life experience without committing to a permanent position • Gives experience and exposure • Finds out if person is suitable for position	• Expensive
Employee exchange	• Gives a broad base of experience • Exposes other people to your institution • May help in future endeavors	• Individual needs to initiate • Need to come up with a match • Has nothing to do with succession planning
Formal training	• Individuals must pursue themselves • Useful	• Still need practical experience • incomplete
Job rotation	• Gives broad base of experience and knowledge • Beneficial in gaining new insights • Useful management strategy for developing individuals • Good process for designating a leader among peers as opposed to a leader above workers	• Not seen as a vertical move • Does not prepare individuals for senior level positions
Lateral job movement	• Gives broader base of experience and knowledge • Broadens organizational expertise and image • Similar to job rotation but individual does not go back to previous position	• Not used as a vehicle for future advancement
Mentorship	• Gives personal support • Someone to talk to and review career options with	• Can be time consuming for mentor
Secondment	• Broadens base of experience	• Not seen as a vertical move • No influence in promoting individuals

weaknesses, as identified in Table 1. It is noteworthy that these could also be viewed as strategies to integrate people within the organization by broadening their experience base. The three mechanisms perceived to be most promising by the two respondents included (a) formal training programs, (b) administrative internship programs, and (c) job rotation. This reflected what these two respondents perceived to be most important for management staff to enhance their own knowledge and experience about postsecondary technical institutions.

Inductive Analysis

Following the deductive data analysis phase, all data were examined to identify emerging themes and patterns. Through inductive means a framework emerged that provided a "broad perspective" of what is required by management staff to progress to other positions in the Institute. According to the respondents, this includes theoretical knowledge, practical experience, intrinsic qualities, and "luck."

A description of the framework shows that career development for management staff comprises, first of all, acquiring theoretical knowledge through formal training. This includes obtaining university credentials, enrolling in executive leadership courses, and taking inservice courses. Next, practical experience is gained by working in diverse jobs; having the opportunity for mentorship; and broadening work experience through administrative internship programs, employee exchange programs, job rotation, lateral job movements, secondments, and attending conferences. Also, having intrinsic management qualities is part of the framework for job progression. This means having the personal traits of empathy, adaptability, flexibility, and assertiveness; and liking people, travel, and success. Lastly, "luck" comes into play, because "being at the right place at the right time" determines whether the opportunities for progressing to other positions occur.

This framework is also influenced by external and internal environments. For example, the framework is influenced by external environments such as current trends. Today the "hot" topics of total quality management and leadership training in learning organizations are prevalent. In addition, the framework is influenced by the internal environment of the organization's culture. This includes its values, rituals, and beliefs. Figure 2 outlines these points in graphic form.

Figure 2 evolved from the respondents' comments on what they perceived management staff needed to progress to other positions in the Institute. For example, Howard stated that

> management staff need a combination of both experience and education. This is especially true in order to become a president in these times. Here, preparation at the doctoral level is very important. Also, having experience in a number of positions and to work your way up is essential because theoretical preparation will not do it alone.

In addition, Dan stated that "being at the right place and at the right time" influences whether individuals progress. For example, this means that "being at a certain meeting could influence whether or not someone takes a look on how well you do." Because there's such a "good pool of people" in the organization, the chances for success are based upon who is "at the right place at the right time." Also, Dan stated that in order to succeed, the individuals need "*EQ* as opposed to *IQ*. EQ is emotional intelligence and sensitivity." A high degree of empathy is needed to survive, as well as positive interaction with other people, flexibility, and adaptability.

In reference to external environment of trends, Dan emphasized that the issue of quality management is still considered a "flavor of the month," and "who the customer is" needs to be defined before quality can be truly applied to the institution. In addition, a component of quality management is leadership training, which requires ongoing development. According to Howard, "Executive leadership courses through the Canadian Association of Community Colleges are useful tools for future leaders."

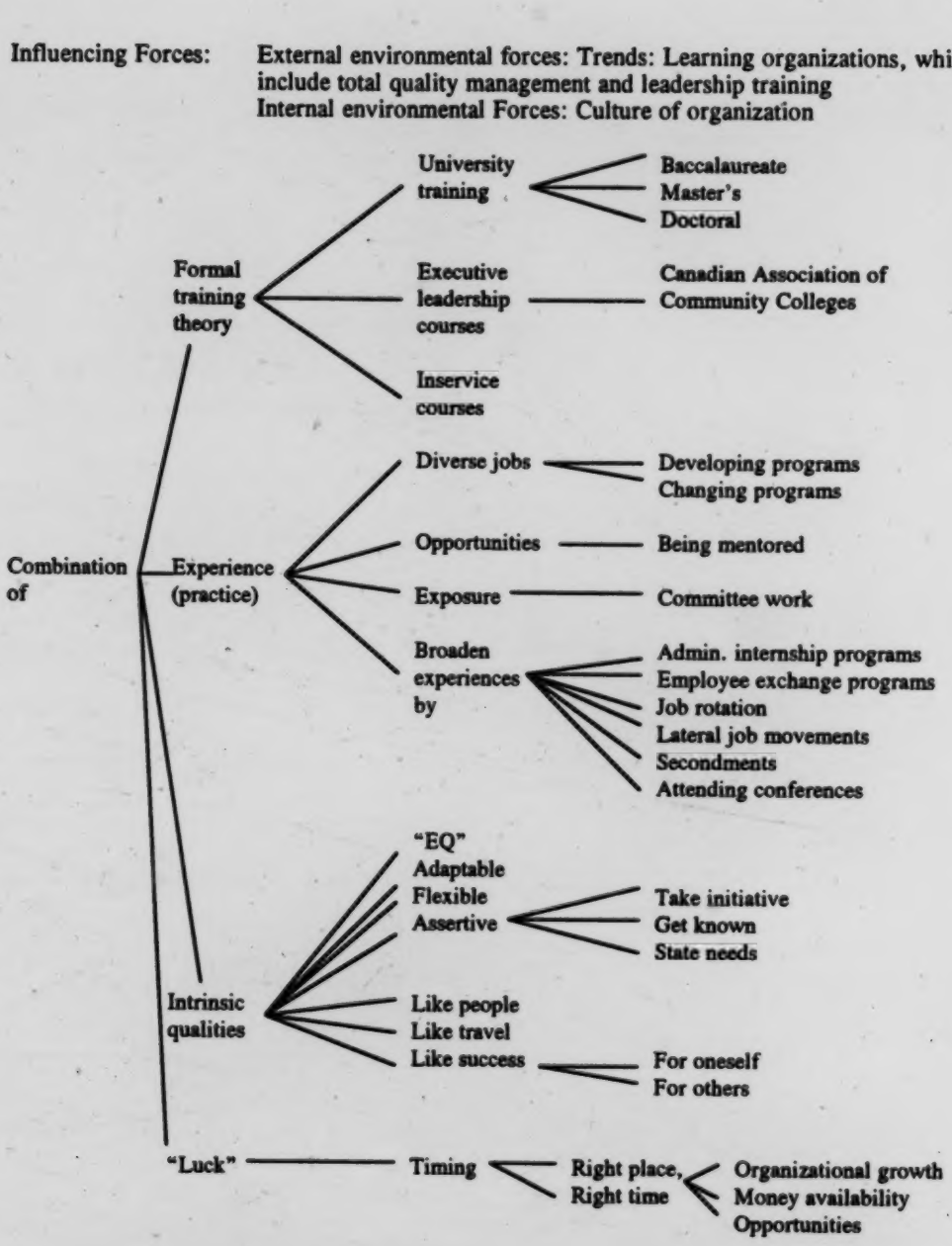


Figure 2. Framework for management staff in progressing to other positions in the Institute (pilot study).

In reference to the internal environment of culture, Dan observed that the culture in an academic environment encourages most teachers to continue teaching for the rest of their careers. Therefore, the organization does not tend to groom individuals for senior administrative positions. People are promoted on the basis of subjectivity because everybody is equally competent. In other words, I like you; you are a friend. I can work with you, so you get the job. Consequently, people are promoted on the basis of taking the path of least resistance.

Overall, this framework addresses the research problem and not only identifies the forms of succession planning, but also shows where these forms fit and how they have value in career development. Primarily, the forms of succession planning are seen as the tools in acquiring practical experience in postsecondary technical institutions.

Main Study Findings

The main study, which very closely mirrored the process used in the pilot study, consisted of interviews with seven management staff from the Institute. In order to ensure confidentiality of these participants, the following pseudonyms were used: Andrew, Blair, Brian, Doug, Gordon, Susan, and Walter. A description of the respondents is given in Table 2 to highlight the demographics of years employed at the Institute and gender of the respondents.

Table 2

Demographics of Respondents in Main Study

Pseudonym	Category	Years employed at the Institute	Gender
Gordon	1. Soon-to-retire executive	10-20	M
Blair	Soon-to-retire executive	>20	M
Andrew	2. Executive management	>20	M
Walter	Executive management	>20	M
Brian	Executive management	10-20	M
Susan	3. Aspiring	10-20	F
Doug	Aspiring	10-20	M

As the data were analyzed both deductively and inductively, themes emerged. Once again, the findings from the deductive analysis are presented first, followed by the findings from the inductive analysis of the data. The context in the following section provides an understanding of the Institute's environment and background.

Context

Smith and Glass (1987) helped to explain context in terms of naturalistic research. They stated that "the aim of naturalistic research is to understand the persons involved, their behavior and perceptions, and the influence of the physical, social and psychological environment or *context* on them" (p. 253). In other words, organizational context is the environment in which human action occurs. In this study, institutional documents and respondents provided information about the organizational context.

To begin with, this large board-governed postsecondary technical institution has created its own niche by focusing on the following areas by (a) offering technical education that is practical and career oriented, (b) responding to the training needs of industry, (c) developing and maintaining strong links with employment sectors, and (d) focusing primarily on technical training in the "wealth-generating" career fields such as health sciences, business, engineering, and trade and industrial technologies. With these points in mind, this institution has focused on quality training for its students. However, a more formal approach to quality resulted in the Institute adopting the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) initiative in 1989.

CQI is defined as a systematic process that uses consultative team approaches to assess, monitor, and adapt the technical institute's operations and services in order to meet or exceed customers' expectations. One of the objectives of the process was to embed quality principles into its operations to achieve efficiency in all aspects of the institution's operations. Human resource management is a component of resource

management that serves to support the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives.

In human resources, a program called Human Resource Renewal is underway to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Brian stressed that this is important because there is a need to operate with fewer resources with an increasing number of students. Here, every service unit is reviewed in terms of operations, outcomes, necessities, and redundancies. Feedback from its customers and staff in the form of surveys and focus groups identified that human resource development and succession planning were important. As part of a bigger picture, a software program called *PeopleSoft* is currently being implemented. It handles a component of succession planning that is to be integrated in June 1998. A function of the *PeopleSoft* program is to help streamline the mechanical processes of inducting new employees by electronically reducing paperwork and retaining applicant files while generating skill profiles. For example, the program reviews who is ready for new positions and what training is required for others. In addition, it has the capability of generating best-case and worst-case scenarios of future trends. Therefore, it is seen as a tool to facilitate the Human Resource Renewal program.

It appears that a strong work ethic is in place in the organization. For example, management staff work hard and give unselfishly of their time and effort to the organization. Also, all people are "important" in the organization; that is why downsizing has occurred conservatively and responsibly over the past 10 years.

However, there are concerns with the implementation of CQIs. There seems to be an uneasiness that there is not a true integration of quality in the organization because of bureaucratic barriers, such as conflict on "Who is the customer?" and decisions on who is truly accountable—individuals or teams.

The concern for doing "more with less" is an uneasiness expressed by the organization today. The sense at the Institute is that the "need to reinvest in people" is once again important. This feedback was obtained from the Institute's customers through surveys and focus groups. Also, career development has come to the forefront because an aging management staff is drawing attention to how "business" will be done in the future, and the question of "who will be the future leaders" arises. As a result, the organizational context is highlighted in the transition to balance the effects of downsizing, the funding reduction, the aging management population, meeting customer needs, CQI integration, and the Human Resource Renewal program.

Deductive Analysis

In this process, data that were obtained through the interviews were coded according to themes related to the study's sub-problems. These findings are outlined and described in this section. Also, meaning was given to these findings by placing them in context with the participants' responses to the interview questions.

Perceptions of personal career success. The deductive analysis first focused on the issue of "what personal career success in the Institute's environment meant to the respondents." According to the respondents, several factors were necessary to progress and succeed in management; first, personal attributes:

1. Having good technical, human, and conceptual skills in the different job roles held.
2. Having personal qualities of determination, self-efficacy; getting things done; belief in ability to accomplish projects; belief in lifelong learning; allowing for reflection, high achievement, and self-direction.
3. Being resilient, creative, hard working; and trying to make a difference.
4. Enjoying "doing" and trying to see the "big picture."
5. Liking and inviting change.

6. Having the opportunity to learn and grow in every position obtained.

7. Asking questions and not letting bureaucracy, fear, or intimidation overwhelm.

8. Having a natural leadership ability.

9. Doing the best possible job.

These traits were succinctly summarized by Gordon, who stated that "attitude becomes the most important discriminator." This means being sincere and motivated for the right reasons, going that "extra mile," being positive, and having a good sense of humor. The most important personal qualities appear to be (a) having a desire for personal learning, (b) liking what one does, and (c) doing the best possible job.

Second, the perception of success came from having a diverse background, which meant having the opportunity to work in a variety of different positions. This experience gave individuals opportunities to broaden their perspectives. For example, Brian and Blair claimed that having experience in various positions gives a breadth of experience and creates a network of contacts. Blair concluded that the opportunity of every job move broadens one's perspective, scope, and thinking. Also, international assignments give one a different perspective on "what the world is all about." Overall, working in different positions allowed new thinking, learning, and approaches to problem solving.

Third, the perception of success came from "timing" or being "at the right place at the right time." This was verified by Brian, who claimed that in the past opportunities were available because the organization was going through significant expansion and growth versus downsizing as it is today. However, Gordon commented that "good people with the 'right attitude' are always required within the organization."

Lastly, success was perceived to come more easily in an environment or culture that fulfilled the needs of its management staff. For Blair this meant working in an

organization that was able to satisfy a "curiosity factor" of how things happen, how things get done, who is in control, and how decisions are made. Also, he claimed that people in the organization offered a high level of expertise, and they themselves were curious and stimulating. In addition, the opportunity of making decisions, developing organizational models, and a strong work ethic complemented Blair's needs. For Susan this allowed the "opportunity for examining organizational processes such as program development and delivery, identifying 'gaps' in this area, and taking action to get people thinking in a different direction."

The perception of success came from having the intrinsic qualities of self-efficacy, determination, high achievement, self-direction, resiliency, and liking change, complemented with technical, human, and conceptual skills. These intrinsic qualities then acted as catalysts for obtaining different positions in the organization, which was essential to see the organization from a broad perspective. These intrinsic qualities were nurtured by a culture that offered the opportunities for individuals to work in diverse positions where they had the authority and power to make changes to improve the organization. Overall, the respondents' perceptions of success came from (a) having certain intrinsic qualities, (b) working in diverse positions, (c) having the authority to make change, and (d) being "at the right place at the right time."

Progression training and programs. The "availability of special training and programs to assist management staff in progressing within the postsecondary educational system" was the second theme addressed in the deductive analysis of the data. The respondents expressed different perceptions as to whether the educational system offered any special training or programs to assist them in progressing within the organization. The responses ranged from claims that the system offered many programs to statements that there were no programs or special training available. The following comments addressed these points:

> The educational system offers special training programs to assist management staff in progressing within the organization. These include, first of all, inservice training which offers courses on how to become better educators, supervisors, and leaders. Secondly, there are opportunities to attend conferences and seminars. Thirdly, work experience or industrial leaves are available. Lastly, there is a *4 for 5* plan for people who need personal renewal and rejuvenation. All in all, people are more interested in people's competence rather than their degrees. People want to know what people have in terms of experience, not educational degrees.

> The Institute offers short-term staff development from individual cost centers and long-term staff development such as educational leaves, exchanges, secondments, and international projects. However, for individuals wanting to be at a certain position or aspiring to become a president, it's pretty well up to the individual to chart their own course. This includes preparing oneself through formal training programs, applying for leaves, applying for conferences, taking lateral moves, leaving the organization and coming back.

> There isn't any special training or programs for management staff to assist them in progressing within the organization. There are just inservice courses for leadership and supervisory skills. These are only pieces, but nothing collective is offered. There is more of a push towards university courses in getting a recognizable credential.

However, several respondents perceived that the organization was getting better at developing this "fit" because the organization was at the "edge" of adopting programs to make these changes. For example, the software program *PeopleSoft* was adopted as part of the Human Resource Renewal program. This software program also has a component of succession planning to be administered in June 1998, so changes were planned for the future. Possibilities of focus in this component include career paths, career development, training, mentoring, and evaluation.

These findings suggest that there was a good range of program offerings in terms of inservice courses, formal training programs, experiential leaves, and conference opportunities. However, there was a need to develop a "customized plan" for management individuals. In this way, these program offerings would be organized in a structured plan. This would help management staff to extend their knowledge while considering the needs of the organization.

Job movement programs. The third theme that evolved from the deductive analysis related to "identification of programs to assist management staff to progress to other positions within the Institute." In addition to program offerings that were already available within the organization, respondents gave feedback on what was further required for management staff to progress to other positions within the organization. According to several respondents, the key need identified in the area of job movement programs was the need for a "career development training program" for management staff. According to Walter, it was important to "develop stronger performance review processes, set professional development objectives, and help management staff to find opportunities. By knowing people's goals, they could match them against organizational goals." This involved identifying where the organization was going in order to identify the right training tools. Blair also recommended that a "gap" analysis be conducted in order to determine management training needs. These positions also would require an inventory of skills so that individuals would know the expectations of the job, understand the requirements of the job, and then work towards gaining the proper qualifications or credentials necessary to do that job. Andrew, Doug, and Brian expanded on each other's comments by claiming that individuals would also go through a screening process such as OAD (Organizational Analysis Design), JAX (Job Analysis Expert), MBTI (Myers Briggs Type Indicator), and SRI (Select Research Incorporated) to verify that their attributes and natural abilities fit with the expectation of the job role. Also, Doug discussed the need for theoretical and experiential leadership training. Combined with this training is the need to understand the difference between a leader, manager, and administrator. Doug also said that leadership training takes time, and it cannot be rushed. This further validates the importance of practicing leadership rather than just studying it.

According to Blair, management staff people need 360-degree feedback, support, and encouragement. In this frame of reference, Doug confirmed that people should be encouraged "to be all they can." Ongoing support would provide management staff with opportunities to work in different positions inside or outside the organization to learn new skills and challenge the current ones.

What was clearly identified was that management staff need a formalized career development plan. The components of this process include knowing the organization's vision, identifying skills inventory for management positions, addressing management staff's personal learning, finding opportunities to fill learning gaps, and evaluating the progress. This entire process also required 360-degree feedback, support, and encouragement.

Job progression programs. The fourth theme addressed "mechanisms that would offer the most potential or value for management staff to use to progress to other positions within the postsecondary technical institution." The strategies promoting job progression included (a) administrative internship programs, (b) employee exchange programs, (c) formal training programs, (d) job rotation, (e) lateral job movements, (f) mentorship, and (g) secondments. In the process of acquiring feedback, a list of these mechanisms and their definitions was given to the respondents for their assessment. Feedback on each of these areas was given in terms of advantages and disadvantages. These seven strategies and their strengths and weaknesses are described below. Table 3 provides an overview of the advantages and disadvantages of each strategy.

In a review of these findings it became apparent that the mechanisms of succession planning could be categorized into three groupings: (a) formal training programs, (b) the "trading" of positions (e.g., job rotation, lateral job movements, secondments inside and outside the organization, administrative internship programs,

Table 3

Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Various Forms of Succession Planning (Main Study)

Program	Advantages	Disadvantages
Administrative internship	• Helps in advancing people • Gives a greater understanding of the "big picture" • Participant works in position for a year • Broadens one's perspective of the organization and its operation	• Not cost effective • No decision-making responsibility • Useful but not practical • Temporary promotion • In conflict with team leadership because training is for one person • Problem of what to do with people after they finish their internship • Work could be frustrating if not meaningful
Employee exchange	• Allows a different perspective on how job is done • Personal and social gain • Cost effective • Can be done internally and externally • Need to have technical knowledge of area to be managed • Improves organization(s) • Deans could switch between institutions • Updates skills at the management level • Role needs to be significant so learning is achieved	• Can create chaos if too many people are exchanged at one time • People not comfortable working in unrelated program areas
Formal training	• Program needs to fit with management needs • Develop programs for managers and supervisors that fit with today's issues; i.e., key performance indicators, business plan development • Need for planning and following a training sequence • Keeps management staff up-to-date; must be ongoing process • University programs give credentials • CQI facilitator course has greater value to institution than university courses • Theoretical training helps to develop models	• Process is overused • Not all courses useful in postgraduate studies at the university • Inservice courses do not prepare management staff for other jobs

(table continues)

Program	Advantages	Disadvantages
Job rotation	• Opportunity to enhance skills because vertical moves are limited • Can facilitate a succession planning program • Useful and practical • Can rotate team leaders every 2 or 3 years • Cost effective • Opportunity to test and develop new skills • Beneficial in gaining new insights • Useful management strategy for developing individuals	• Chaos in organization if wanted to rotate several people at a time • People not willing to rotate because have developed areas of expertise, are comfortable, do not want an increase in workload • Problem of crossing between academic and nonacademic areas
Lateral job movement	• Increases skill level across organization • Gives people a different perspective, breadth, and level of understanding • Opportunity to enhance skills because vertical movement is limited • Opportunity to deal with a variety of situations • Ability to bring something different to a new job • Opportunity to cross between academic and nonacademic side of operation	• Not used as a vehicle for future advancement
Mentorship	• Useful because steers people on the right course • Provides feedback and a sounding board for thoughts and ideas • Opportunity to trust in the advice of other people • Opportunity for people to feel good about themselves	• People are protective of their positions, so are less apt to be mentors • Informal mentorship more prevalent than formal mentorship programs • Takes time to be a mentor
Secondment	• Great opportunity to learn • Opportunity to move within the organization to experience a new role for a period of time • Opportunity to gain extra talents and skills and bring back new knowledge to the position or organization that was left • Excellent way to create a win-win situation • Broadens one's horizons and experiences	• Not seen as a means for future promotions • Mostly used for internal projects • Worthwhile only if department or organization wants person back because will add real value for that person coming back to organization

exchange programs inside and outside the organization), and (c) formal and informal mentorship. This allowed for further distinguishing the mechanisms and for grouping similar ones. For example, the property of "trading" or "moving" people into different positions allowed the mechanisms of job rotation, lateral job movements, secondments, administrative internship programs, and exchange programs to be grouped together. These approaches are very different from formal training programs, where didactic learning takes place and from mentorship, where developing trust is the key. Even though direct quotations are not given, the following are respondents' comments from the interviews.

Formal training programs. Formal training programs help candidates to develop a theoretical framework from which to solve problems. However, it is important that formal training programs be pertinent to personnel and management needs. In other words, programs or courses need to be planned and need to fit with individuals' growth and development needs and the organization's needs. There must be a formal training sequence; otherwise, money and time will likely be wasted if candidates do not work towards a clear purpose or goal. Also, a focus on customizing programs on pertinent issues of key performance indicators, business plan development, collective agreement, and CQI facilitation is important. This is enhanced with university credentials in having the ability to round out management staff. The key is not to overuse formal training programs but to develop courses to address specific individual and organizational needs.

The trading of positions. The areas of job rotation, lateral job movements, secondments, administrative internship programs, and employee exchange programs are described in detail in this subsection.

Job rotations are viewed as useful management strategies for developing individuals because opportunities to test and develop new skills in different roles are

provided. Job rotations are especially valuable today because vertical job movement is often restricted because of organizational downsizing. Two or three years in a job rotation position is viewed as a good time frame for learning for team leaders. It is also viewed by management staff as being cost effective and facilitating succession planning because a broadening of knowledge regarding the functions of the organization occurs.

On the other hand, job rotation could cause chaos in an organization if several groups of people are rotated at the same time. Walter declared that individuals may not want to be rotated to other areas because there is a sense of insecurity about not doing well, and an increase in workload is a result of this change. There also appears to be a barrier in crossing between the academic and nonacademic areas. Overall, however, it appears that the strengths of this process outweigh its weaknesses.

Lateral job movement allows for growth and new skills learning. This is especially important because of the lack of vertical job advancement and opportunities within the organization. Brian claimed that this develops candidates by giving them a "different perspective and breadth of understanding" by acquiring the experience to work at different jobs in the organization. It also allows for the flexibility of crossing between academic and nonacademic sides of the organization. However, for some, lateral job movements are not seen as a vehicle for future advancement.

Secondments can be internal or external and can offer opportunities to gain experience by allowing staff to work in a different role for a period of time. Blair felt that this enables candidates to gain new talents and skills to later bring back to their organization. Secondments broaden the candidates' horizons and create a "win-win" situation for the organization and the candidate. However, this mechanism is not seen as a means for future advancement, and it is only worthwhile if the candidate returns to the previous job. Overall, this mechanism is another way of gaining new learning and skills.

Administrative internship programs allow the participants to "test the waters" by working in management positions. Here, the individual is then better able to assess his or her aptitude for management work. The opportunity of "trying it out" without a permanent commitment gives the participant a choice for future endeavors. It was also viewed by management staff as a stepping stone for higher positions in the future because a broader perspective of the organization is experienced in this role.

On the other hand, administrative internship programs are not cost effective and do not focus on decision-making responsibilities. This contradicts the role of management staff, where decision making is a major function. Walter stated that "if people aren't given real, meaningful work to do, then it can be quite frustrating." In addition, participants are often not comfortable with temporary promotions because of the lack of certainty of where they will be placed in the organization after the completion of the internship. Finally, there is the concern that this mechanism looks at "grooming" one person only. This is a contradiction to team leadership. Overall, it would appear to have some value by "trying out management."

Employee exchange programs were identified as cost effective and offered candidates opportunities to acquire new learning, up-date skills, gain new friendships, and extend networks of contacts within and without the organization. For the organization or organizations involved, different perspectives and points of view are acquired on how to perform the work and solve problems. In the long run, Doug claimed, the candidate and the organization improve. An example of this mechanism is deans from different postsecondary educational institutions exchanging roles. Brian also stated that "it is pretty cost effective."

According to Blair, a negative aspect of exchange programs centers on participants' lack of comfort when working in unrelated program areas because of deficiencies in technical knowledge or background. Also, roles need to be significantly

challenging so that they complement the candidates' abilities and achieve learning. Chaos can be created if too many people are shifted and moved in employee exchange programs.

Mentorship. Mentorship is seen as a means to learn from one's peers and supervisors. Mentorship relies on the feedback that results from the development of trusting relationships between mentors and less-experienced colleagues. Regarding mentoring, Doug stated that "people need to feel good about themselves, and they need to trust in the advice of other good people." Therefore, finding that trust is important for the development of people. The process is mostly informal rather than formal because mentoring takes time, and people are protective of their positions; it tends to be used less in organizations. Overall, this area could be valuable for helping to develop management staff because mentors assist protégés in progressing.

Effective Succession Planning Programs

Through the use of a simple frequency count, five mechanisms were identified as being perceived to be most effective by respondents in preparing management staff for other positions within the organization; namely, (a) job rotation, (b) formal training programs, (c) mentorship, (d) secondments, and (e) administrative internship programs. These were seen as the most valuable mechanisms for several reasons. Job rotations ranked first because they offered opportunities for developing skills and gaining new insights. As a result, ongoing learning can be achieved. Job rotations were seen as a way to facilitate succession planning. Formal training programs, mentorship, and secondments were rated as equally effective. Even though they are very different from one another, they contribute in increasing knowledge and developing skills. For example, formal training programs give individuals theoretical knowledge through the use of models or frameworks. Mentorship provides an element of trust between people in an organization, and secondments allow for learning new skills and knowledge and

the opportunity to bring them back to the previous position. Finally, administrative internship programs ranked fifth. They offered the experience to work in management and the opportunity to decide if a career in management is wanted for the future. Therefore, they are all different but have individual strengths.

Several respondents recommended combining these mechanisms in order to achieve greater value. For example, formal training programs could be combined with job rotations, which would create a broader scope of experience and knowledge.

Inductive Analysis

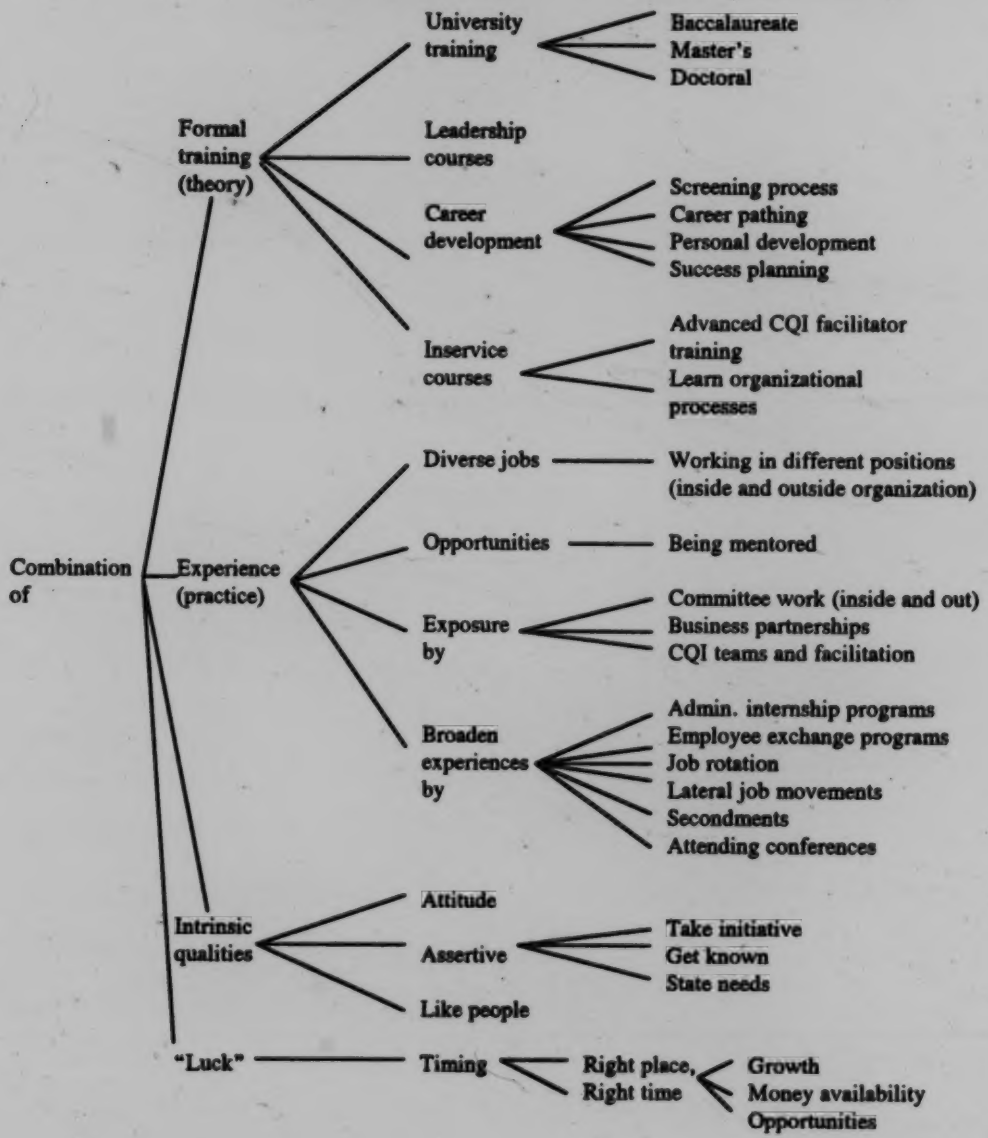
Following the deductive analysis of the data, the seven respondents' interviews were analyzed inductively. At this stage the data were examined to identify emerging themes and patterns. These themes and patterns formed the basis for emergent theory. Inductive analysis was used in addition to deductive analysis in order to check and compare both perspectives of analyses.

In an analysis of the findings in the main study, the framework that appeared from inductively analyzing the findings in the pilot study emerged once again. The findings in the main study are discussed in the following pages and relate to Figure 3.

Formal training. The framework in Figure 3 represents "what management staff need to progress to other positions in a postsecondary technical institution." In discussing formal training in this framework, the importance of a university education was stressed. The following are respondents' comments that reflected this point:

> If you want to continue to progress in postsecondary education, you need to have a minimum of a master's degree. If you're aspiring to a presidential position, particularly in the college sector, a PhD is an asset. A PhD is not as crucial in the technical sector.
>
> Lack of postgraduate work is probably an impediment.
>
> If I don't get further education such as a PhD or an EdD, then I'm probably stunted for obtaining a vice-president position.

Influencing Forces: External environmental forces: Demographics, Economics, Society, Technology, and Trends
Internal environmental Forces: Culture, Bureaucracy, and Politics



Note: Throughout the process, feedback is essential.

Figure 3. Framework for management staff in progressing to other positions in the Institute (main study).

Obviously, a university education was seen to be important for individuals to progress in the organization.

Andrew suggested that seminars on career planning should be offered so management staff acquire information on how to chart out a personal career developmental path. A component of career development is the screening process. He claimed that screening tools have been adopted to generate desired profiles for particular roles. Andrew further explained the use of screening tools. To begin with, a number of deans go through and rate the dean's position by a number of dimensions. As a result, a profile of the position is generated.

> Actually, it is a linear profile using different dimensions. Then as part of a job interview process, candidates are asked to complete a questionnaire, and their profile is developed. In theory, if their profile is more consistent with the general pattern, then they're better suited for the job. I don't think we're at the point of saying if somebody's profile doesn't fit, they are unable to do the job. But I think a lot of the basic elements are there.

According to several respondents, OAD (Organization Analysis Design), JAX (Job Analysis Expert), MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator), and SRI (Select Research Incorporated) are examples of screening tools that are used by the Institute.

Screening processes help to determine if an individual's "natural being" fits with the "ideal profile" of a management staff member. This helps to identify an individual's strengths and weaknesses, it assists in understanding an individual's dynamics, and it shows where he/she best fits within the organization. Consequently, training needs can be built on this premise.

Career planning focuses on the personal aspects of management's lives. Andrew stated that with more experiences of success in a career, work becomes more onerous and you have to keep a balance with your work and life. Maintaining physical health is a priority. Because the job responsibilities are extremely demanding in terms of time, commitment, and workload, management personnel need to learn to balance their lives

and maintain good health in this process. Therefore, the issues of personal control, wellness, and life planning come into play in developing a successful career.

Succession planning was also discussed as a means of career development. Brian perceived the process as consisting of several steps: (a) developing a competency profile for each job such as skills, competencies, and attitudes; (b) identifying people who look like they have the potential to move to management positions; (c) developing a skills inventory for these individuals; and (d) assisting individuals to acquire components of the job. Figure 4 shows the steps in the succession planning process, as identified by the respondents. This framework involves having a "vision" or the "ultimate dream" for the use of succession planning in the organization. This vision is made possible by committing financial resources to the organization's long-term planning process. With this funding, competency profiles can be developed for each management position and potential candidates can be identified. As a result,

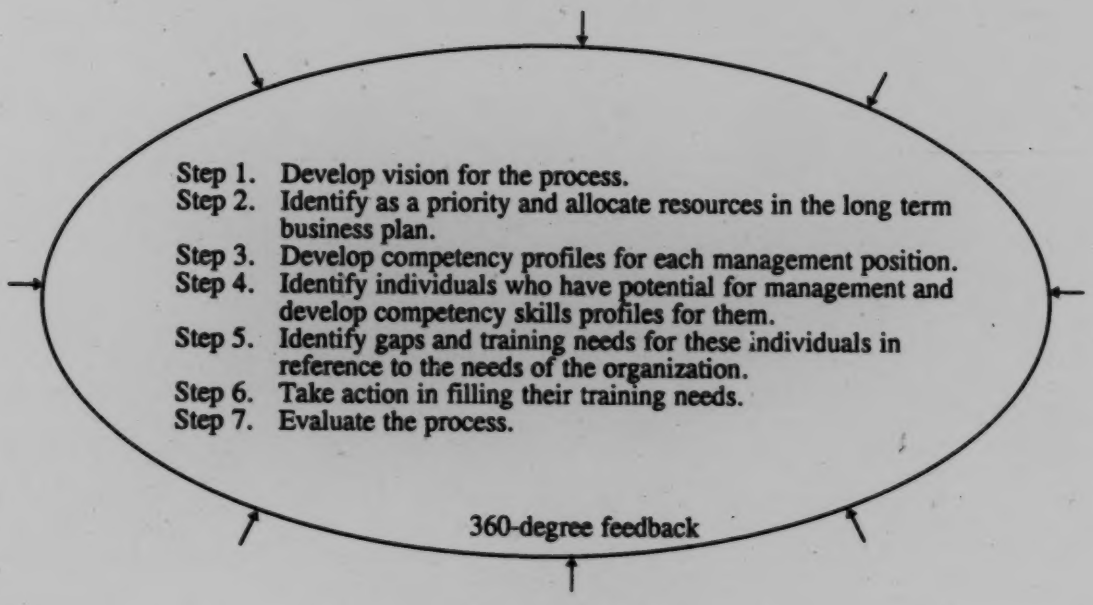

Step 1. Develop vision for the process.
Step 2. Identify as a priority and allocate resources in the long term business plan.
Step 3. Develop competency profiles for each management position.
Step 4. Identify individuals who have potential for management and develop competency skills profiles for them.
Step 5. Identify gaps and training needs for these individuals in reference to the needs of the organization.
Step 6. Take action in filling their training needs.
Step 7. Evaluate the process.
360-degree feedback

Figure 4. The succession planning process.

competency profiles, knowledge gaps, and training needs can be identified for the selected candidates. Action can then be taken to fulfill their training needs. Lastly, the entire process can be evaluated to verify that the needs of the individual and the needs of the organization are met. Also, the entire process of succession planning takes place with 360-degree feedback or ongoing support from, reinforcement by, and discussion with supervisors and peers.

In an analysis of these findings, the premise of this model was to develop a competency skills profile for each management position within the organization and its potential management individuals. By identifying "gaps" and developing a "fit" with the individual and the organization, career and organizational needs are met. This must be developed on the basis that this concept is a priority for the organization and candidates receive ongoing feedback in the process for support and encouragement.

Lastly, respondents made several very positive comments on inservice courses. The following responses were typical:

> Inservice courses help individuals to learn about organizational processes which are fundamental to getting one's job done.
>
> This training focuses on how to become better educators, leaders, and supervisors in the organization.
>
> Gives value in updating skills that are pertinent at the time.
>
> Inservice courses are more for instructors and staff in supportive roles rather than individuals who aspire to work in management.

Doug claimed that his Advanced CQI Facilitator training certificate was more important than his master's degree or baccalaureate. He stated that his "CQI facilitation skills were incredibly valued." Overall, inservice courses were seen as having value as tools for the effective functioning of the organization. They help staff to develop a foundation of knowledge to understand how the organization works. However, inservice courses play a small role in management development.

Experience. With reference to experience, several respondents claimed that it is important to have a broad repertoire of diverse jobs in order to develop a broad perspective of how the organization functions. This included working for the Department of Advanced Education, working on international assignments, and working in different positions in the organization. This is achieved by working in different positions inside and outside the organization. Brian stated that people at the Institute are interested in "what you can do rather than what your degrees are." However, it is important to keep in mind that university credentials generate a status for the individual and the educational institution. Therefore, mechanisms such as administrative internship programs, employee exchange programs, job rotations, lateral job movements, and secondments are helpful in providing a link to gaining knowledge through experience, whereas university credentials enhance the individual's and organization's images.

Experience is further gained by participating in committee work inside and outside of the organization. Brian, Gordon, and Doug recognized that this involves volunteering for internal and external committees such as the United Way, developing business partnerships with senior business leaders, working on a number of CQI teams, and working in the capacity of a CQI facilitator to deal with organizational issues.

Finally, mentoring was seen as a means to gain knowledge about the organization because it uses the premise of developing trust and support between experienced and less experienced individuals in the organization.

Intrinsic qualities. Personal intrinsic qualities were seen by one respondent as critical for successful job succession. Gordon stated that "attitude becomes the most important discriminator." Attitude was seen to have many facets, including being (a) hard working; (b) being sincere; (c) being empathic; (d) being patient; (e) being tolerant; (f) being a good listener; (g) being objective; (h) being a team player;

(i) doing the best possible job; (j) needing to learn, grow, and achieve; (k) being assertive; and (l) liking to work with people. Gordon stated that "when you have problems in an organization, 95% are people problems." Consequently, the need to like to work with people is critical.

Other factors. "Luck" or timing or "being at the right place at the right time" was another area that helped management staff to progress to positions in the organization. According to Blair, this meant becoming part of the organization when it was growing and developing. In a way, he "grew up" with the organization because opportunities were plentiful and promotions were available. This stands in stark contrast to the downsizing or "flattening of structures" that has been occurring in the Institute over the past number of years.

In addition, Andrew stated that

> succession planning from the organization's perspective or career development from the individual's perspective is probably no better than 50/50 planning and implementation versus chance and opportunity. Part of it is conscious choice, but part of it is just chance as well; what you end up with may be very different than what you thought.

Brian added to this in a discussion of career development in terms of the "gumball" theory. He stated that

> some people focus on their careers from day one. However, frequently what happens is that opportunities present themselves and it's not so much a linear progression but rather a progression through a stage of opportunities. Someone described it as the gumball approach to career development. If you imagine yourself, as a gumball in one of the gumball machines, you tend to have contact with a certain variety of things immediately around you. You're not often in contact with furthest gumball, so you kind of move into those opportunities as they present themselves.

Therefore, luck and destiny play a hand in career development.

Feedback. According to Blair, feedback is essential for the health of the organization. Blair termed this as "360-degree feedback." This addresses how individuals are doing, what they might do better, and what they have in mind next.

Individuals require ongoing support and recognition for what they are doing. Susan also explained that "the only feedback you receive is when people need something from you, so it's always a request for information." There is no philosophy of saying, "You're doing a good job." Doug claimed that he searched for feedback in different ways, because the old adage of "It gets lonely at the top" is really quite true. It appears that people desire appreciation and recognition for what they do.

Influencing Forces

Environmental forces also affect how management staff progress to other positions in the postsecondary technical institution. They can be viewed as forces outside or inside the organization that serve to mold and shape how the organization conducts business.

External environmental forces. External environmental forces include the areas of (a) an aging management population, (b) fewer resources because of government grant cutbacks, (c) maintaining organizational effectiveness and efficiency, (d) technological change, (e) competition, and (f) trends such as learning organizations. In reference to the aging management population, an "experience gap" is being created because management in the "twilight years" of their careers are leaving the organization. This is because of the availability of early retirement packages in response to the downsizing and collapsing of educational bureaucratic structures. According to Doug, demographic analysis shows that within five years, 65 to 75 percent of all management staff will be eligible for retirement, and the youngest age group in management today is between 40 to 45 years of age. Therefore, there is the concern of who will take the technical institution forward in the near future and whether there will be continuity of knowledge during this transition. Consequently, the issues of who will be the future leaders and whether they will be prepared to deal with

forces of competition, limited resources, accountability, and technological advancement are pertinent at the Institute.

Fewer resources as a result of government grant cutbacks in education also are impinging on the organization's ability to plan for succession. According to Gordon, a 21% cutback resulted in collapsing structures, handing out severances, and eliminating redundancies. However, the pressure to maintain effectiveness and efficiency within the organization for its customers still exists.

Educational institutions that stay current with technological advances, such as computers, and that maintain effectiveness will be able to surpass their competition and maintain the market share of students by satisfying their customers' needs in a timely manner. According to Brian, the use of a computerized program for human resources - functions will create efficiency in terms of paperwork and follow-up. Susan stated that a "technological edge is important for organizational survival."

The trends in learning organizations such as leadership training, continuous quality improvement, and succession planning serve to mold and shape organizations. Some of these topics have received attention by a number of authors and are advocated as the direction for the future. For example, Doug recognized that in order to succeed, progress, grow, and know how to deal with restructuring, downsizing, and change, he needed to have more CQI facilitation training; to read books by John Cotter, William Bridges, Margaret Wheatley, Steven Covey, and Peter Senge; and to acquire information on learning organizations.

Also, learning organizations focus on the concept of continuous quality improvement as an approach to learning. The concepts of Total Quality Management (TQM) and Continuous Quality Initiative (CQI) have been adopted by the Institute. Here, the notions of working in teams and team learning are the foundations for problem solving. Leadership is an ongoing point of discussion because of the concern

of what kinds of leaders are required for tomorrow. Lastly, the concept of succession planning can be viewed as a trend for management career development. For many management staff, this is a new way of developing careers. Overall, some of the trends will be valuable concepts to adopt, whereas others will be more a "flavor of the month" and will do more harm than good for the organization. Therefore, careful analysis of the concepts must be conducted to pick and choose the right ones for the organization.

External environmental forces include economics, demographics, societal influences, technological advancement, and trends. First, the availability of fewer resources and "doing more with less" can be viewed as an economic environmental force. I perceived that the current objective of the provincial government is to reduce the province's deficit and save money by cutting back on governmental programs, bureaucratic layers, and funding. This has had a "trickle down" effect and as a result, postsecondary education has received a 21% grant cutback, which has led to early retirements and the recognition of a demographic change. A large population of aging management staff are leaving and taking their knowledge and experience with them. Third is the societal environmental force or societal pressure, where the public still wants effectiveness, efficiency, and quality even though the cutbacks have occurred. Fourth, the technological environmental force further reinforces that technological change is part of our lives and is moving in "leaps and bounds." The organizations that will be able to cope, adapt, and be knowledgeable in the use of technological tools will have the competitive edge.

Internal environmental forces. Environmental forces include the traditions embedded in the culture of the organization, the CQI premise of team building, and bureaucracy. Culture represents the rituals, values, and unwritten rules on how the organization functions. The respondents' comments on the culture of the Institute

varied from person to person. First of all, Blair identified the competition model as being used to promote management staff. Doug and Susan believed that the organization is traditional, and to progress in the organization one must pay dues and take progression in a certain order. Secondly, there also appears to be a clear demarcation between academic and nonacademic areas. Finally, Doug, Susan, and Blair suggested that there needs to be more encouragement from peers and superiors in progressing within the organization. This was supported by Doug's comment that there is little mentoring because "there is a certain system, and it's worked well."

It appears that the past traditions of promoting management staff through a competition model have worked well and that this competitive process complements the public sector's method of staff selection. For example, because education is public and its funding is obtained from the government, it is only natural for the organization to use similar government processes. However, with the implementation of succession planning as part of the Human Resource Renewal program in June 1998, a number of points come to light. For example, Blair contended that the institution is more a business or a corporation than a governmental agency. For this type of business approach the good things of succession planning, career planning, and carving out career paths for individuals are utilized.

There is a distinct boundary between academic and nonacademic areas, and very few people cross over and work in the other area. Consequently, unwritten rules set the stage on how the organization functions. The concept of succession planning may affect this mind-set.

CQI is becoming part of the culture of the organization. The concepts of *team building, equality for all,* and *collaborative decision making* are components of the model. Blair stated that

> I don't quite know how quality management looks at succession planning because quality management is about team work, team activity, team leaders, and not necessarily any leader being locked in for very long. It's project specific but somewhere along the way you have to have a president of the company and some kind of accountability and responsibility roles. So in my own mind, I don't know how quality management fits into succession planning.

Succession planning, on the other hand, uses a process where certain people are selected to be part of a "pool" of potential leaders.

There are also bureaucratic environmental forces that affect the organization. Blair stated that "the Institute's quality management initiative is not there because we still have the hierarchical mind-set with bias and ambition. So the Institute's quality management initiative is not what I think is TQM, or total quality management." There appear to be opposing forces within the structure of the organization that will take time to sort. Therefore, CQI processes are in opposition to succession planning and the present bureaucratic structure. It appears that the internal environmental forces at the Institute need to be reviewed and understood in order to address them adequately.

Analysis of the internal environmental forces of culture, bureaucracy, and politics reveals that they affect how decisions are made in the organization. These also can be looked at as "thought frames" in educational administration. For example, culture reflects the values, rituals, and traditions of the organization. At the Institute, the competition model has worked well in the past in promoting management staff. Consequently, the concept of preplanned succession is unfamiliar to the educational culture. There is some uncertainty about succession planning, CQI processes, governmental processes, and bureaucracy. This requires that a new mind-set be adopted with respect to the culture, politics, and bureaucracy of the organization.

Summary

The key focus of the chapter was on presenting findings from the data that were obtained deductively and inductively from the respondents in the pilot and main studies. First, the findings were deductively coded according to the research sub-problems. The findings that arose from this process were categorized according to the headings of (a) perceptions of personal career success at the Institute, (b) the availability of special training and programs to assist management staff at the Institute, (c) identifying programs to assist management staff to progress to other positions at the Institute, and (d) assessing the forms or mechanisms of succession planning that would be most effective for management staff to use in progressing to other positions in the Institute. The mechanisms that were assessed included administrative internship programs, employee exchange programs, formal training programs, job rotation, lateral job movements, mentorship, and secondments.

In a discussion of each of these topics, the following findings were derived. First, management staff perceived the success of their careers in terms of (a) having a variety of personal attributes that were required for management work, (b) having a diverse experiential background, (c) "being at the right place at the right time," and (d) working in an environment that was fulfilling and offered learning. Second, management staff perceived that the availability of special training and programs to assist management in progressing within the Institute were somewhat available because inservice courses, formal training programs, experience leaves, and conference opportunities were offered. However, it was the individual's responsibility to develop a "course of action" or a "plan of action" to take this training forward and build a career. Fundamentally, the culture of the Institute appears to have its focus on teacher development rather than management development, and the "unwritten rules" of the Institute influence career success for management staff. Third, management staff felt

that they needed a formalized development plan to assist them in progressing to other positions within the organization. This included identifying a skills inventory for management positions, addressing management staff's personal learning, finding opportunities to fill learning gaps, evaluating the process, and obtaining feedback. Fourth, management staff believed that job rotation, formal training programs, mentorship, secondments, and administrative programs were the most effective forms of succession planning in preparing them to progress to other positions in the Institute. It was important in planning that their use be substantial, be well thought out, be organized to create learning, and fit with the needs of the individual and the organization.

The findings were inductively analyzed to identify emerging themes and patterns. From this process arose a conceptual framework that could assist management staff in conceptualizing their progress to other positions at the Institute. This framework addressed management staff's need for a combination of theoretical formal training, practical experience, "luck," and intrinsic qualities. It showed that the forms of succession planning were only some of the ways of helping management staff to improve their career development by obtaining theoretical knowledge and practical experience; other means include committee work, CQI facilitation, and business partnership development. This framework was influenced by external and internal environmental forces that shaped and molded how the organization conducted business in career development. Second, a succession planning model also emerged from the findings, which focused on developing a competency skills profile for each management position and identifying potential candidates. As a result, competency profiles, knowledge gaps, and training needs were identified for the selected candidates. Action can then be taken to fulfill management staff training needs. Lastly, the respondents indicated that the entire process should then be evaluated to verify that

the needs of the individual and the needs of the organization are met. It appears that succession planning at the Institute utilized 360-degree feedback for the ongoing support of, reinforcement by, and discussion with supervisors and peers.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Relationship of the Literature to the Pilot and Main Study Findings

A review of the literature revealed few studies on career development for management staff. There was even less information on the topic of succession planning in education. As a result, there appears to be a "gap" or a lack of research in this area.

Given the lack of information in the education literature, a search of business research literature addressing career development and succession planning was conducted. In this frame of reference, the findings from the pilot and the main study paralleled the business research literature. The similarities and differences are discussed in the following sections.

Perception of Personal Career Success

Respondents stated that the perception of personal career success came from having intrinsic qualities or the "right attitude" of self-efficacy, determination, high achievement, self-direction, commitment, resiliency, and liking change. These points paralleled Hall's (1986) belief. He identified a cluster of personality factors that make people more open to change. These included flexibility, tolerance of ambiguity and change, dominance (representing an aspect of positive self-esteem or personality "hardiness") and independence (p. 249). Therefore, one's innate personal traits set the foundation for executive success.

One respondent maintained that "it was important to have good technical, human, and conceptual skills for management positions." Hall (1986) discussed executive learning in terms of "task learning" or improving knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to perform high level jobs effectively (p. 245). Katz (1974) further explained this by identifying three types of managerial task activity or skills, which

included (a) technical or specific knowledge skills, (b) interpersonal or people skills, and (c) conceptual or visionary skills (p. 90). Katz also claimed that at the senior executive level, the person would have been expected to have mastered technical and interpersonal skills. The major new learning task for senior executives would be expected to be conceptual skills (p. 96). It appears that the key in executive learning is to enhance technical and interpersonal skills and to develop conceptual skills learning.

Overall, this blend of traits allowed for opportunities to obtain diverse jobs and different experiences. Respondents also perceived that "having diverse jobs and experiences was a reflection of success." Hall (1986) believed that successful executives had more diversity in their successes and that varied experience appeared to be a major influence on a person's adaptability (p. 250). Therefore, innate personal traits with good technical, human, and conceptual skills increase the likelihood of executive success and generate opportunities for acquiring different positions.

The respondents also felt that personal learning was important. This was the opportunity to grow and learn in every position they obtained. Hall (1986) stated that "of all the qualities necessary for executive success, the capacity for personal learning is probably the most important" (p. 256). Bennis and Nanus (1985) further validated this by claiming that when they asked 90 leaders about the personal qualities needed to run their organizations, they called *personal learning* the most important personal quality (p. 187). The ongoing desire to grow and learn was crucial in obtaining new knowledge, skills, and experiences.

According to several respondents, personal learning was enhanced by a culture that nurtured it. This was achieved by working in an organization that satisfied a "curiosity" factor explaining how things are done and how decisions are made in the Institute. In addition, people in the organization offered one another a high level of experience, curiosity, and stimulus. Bennis and Nanus (1985) claimed that

organizational learning happens at all levels. Individuals learn as part of the daily activity, particularly as they interact with each other and the outside would. At all levels, new knowledge is translated to new goals, procedures, expectation and role structures (p. 191). Hall (1986) identified this as learning that is built into the culture of the organization (p. 256).Learning must be an inherent part of the culture in order that management's need for growth and development are available.

According to the respondents, "being at the right place at the right time" or the "luck factor" was another reason for personal success in their career development. This allowed for greater choices and opportunities to progress within the organization. Miner and Estler (1985) validated this point by claiming that employees can be viewed as successful and mobile despite the lack of a clear career ladder or a calculated plan for career development. Career success is viewed as the result of chance—"being in the right place at the right time" (p. 125). Timing appears to be an important factor in success in being promoted to upper management in public educational organizations such as the Institute.

Progression Training and Programs

It was clearly identified that respondents wanted a "customized plan" for their courses, work experiences, and leaves so that this process could be directed toward filling their knowledge "gaps," which was seen as a necessary bridge to future positions. This reflected a need for a sense of organization and purpose with a focus on future organizational needs, which meant having a "structural model" in place that tied university courses, leadership courses, inservice courses, work experiences, leaves, and committee work to an organized plan. Spoor (1993) explained that an organization's succession plan identifies individuals who either possess or are in the process of acquiring the requisite key skills and experience for effective performance in a particular position. Most plans also provide a means to identify candidate development

and training needs, as well as each person's estimated state of readiness for a specific position (p. 4). Succession planning offers a process that is "customized" to filling knowledge gaps and to acting as a bridge to future positions.

Job Movement Programs

This was tied to needing a formal training program on career development, which is also part of the "customized plan." Hall (1986) stated that

> executive learning should include the opportunity to discuss and explore one's attitudes toward career and personal life. More specifically, the potential senior executive should have an opportunity to do a self-assessment of his or her own needs, interests, skills, and life priorities in relation to the demands and rewards of possible higher-level executive positions to see how well he or she would fit in those positions. This self-assessment should play a major role in determining whether or not the person will remain a high potential candidate. Such a self-assessment would increase the person's fit in higher positions. (p. 251)

Andrew explained that screening tools such as OAD and JAX helped to confirm if personal traits of potential administrators fit with management's traits. Although these are seen as only tools; the identification of personal strengths and weaknesses is important. This information helps to give an objective viewpoint and looks at what the demands are for the management position. In this frame of reference, Andrew also felt that a balance of life is important, because management work is demanding and time consuming. Therefore, career development should address the psychological needs of management staff inside and outside the organization. As a result, career development for management staff should address career and personal needs.

An important part of the customized plan is the need for feedback, support, and encouragement. This parallels Hall's (1986) premise that feedback and support are strongly needed to facilitate the exploratory and trial activities of working in different positions (p. 249). However, it is important to note comments made by Kaplan, Drath, and Kofodimos (1985) that "the higher an executive is in an organization, the more his or her power inhibits receiving feedback and helpful criticism from other people"

(p. 17). Thus it may appear that career success impedes learning because peers avoid giving constructive criticism to people in power positions; therefore, the method of giving and handling feedback to management staff becomes even more important. Kaplan and Palus (1994), Rothwell (1994), and Walker (1992) discussed 360-degree feedback for executives as a psychological assessment tool that gives unbiased evaluation and feedback for participant development. The findings reflect the need for encouragement, appreciation, and feedback from peers and supervisors. Also, as one progresses to higher management levels in the organization, feedback is given in reference to problems rather than successes. This means that problem situations rather than success stories are dealt with more commonly.

Job Progression Programs

The forms or mechanisms of succession planning, including administrative internship programs, employee exchange programs, formal training programs, job rotation, lateral job movements, mentorship, and secondments, were perceived as tools and as means of learning in order to assist management staff to progress to other positions. This was reinforced by Kleiman (1996), who stated that it is necessary to think of a career as a web rather than as a ladder. Smart workers forget the climb and move along webs to gain more skills. When opportunities arise, they are ready (p. B4). Therefore, secondments and lateral job movements can be viewed as "broadening one's experience" and learning new skills. Even though McLaughlin and Yee (1988, cited in Lamarre & Umpleby, 1991) explained success as "vertical moves in the educational environment, rather horizontal moves through secondments and lateral job movements" (p. 8), these mechanisms still have value. These areas give management staff the practice required to broaden their experiences.

The succession planning mechanisms were also categorized into three strands to differentiate them by their different approaches to learning. The three strands were

(a) formal training programs; (b) the "trading" or "moving" of positions or the mechanisms of job rotation, lateral job movements, secondments, administrative internship programs, and exchange programs; and (c) mentorship. This categorization of the mechanisms parallels Hall's (1986) discussion of the various methods used to achieve executive task learning. He said that executive task learning was accomplished by a combination of various means. This included a combination of receptive learning or didactic activities such as classroom lectures and environmental learning or putting people in certain environments which are intended to generate certain outcomes. Examples included job rotation, temporary assignments, employee exchanges, and mentorship. Finally, active learning involves the creation of situations requiring action by the person and this active behavior creates learning. Examples include career and personal counseling, role playing, apprenticeships and on-the-job learning assignments (p. 255).

In comparing the three main headings for the mechanisms for succession planning that were derived by the respondents' comments (formal training programs, trading of positions, and mentorship) to Hall's classification of achieving executive task learning, similarities and differences were found. First, Hall and the respondents similarly identified formal training programs. Both claimed that classroom lectures were a form of formal training. Differences then appeared in how these "tools of learning" were classified. For example, Hall (1986) categorized job rotation, employee exchanges, and mentorship as environmental learning, whereas the respondents in the present study labeled these as the "trading" of positions. Also, the respondents considered mentorship to be a separate category, whereas Hall grouped career and personal counseling, apprenticeships, and on-the-job learning as active learning.

Similarities between the respondents' perceptions and what the literature claimed regarding individual forms or mechanisms of succession planning such as

administrative internship programs, employee exchange programs, formal training programs, job rotation, internal job movements, mentorship, and secondments were also identified. These similarities are addressed below.

Administrative Internship Programs

According to the respondents, this mechanism appeared to have more disadvantages than advantages. On the positive side, it offered the individuals opportunities to see the organization from a broader perspective, the chance of working in management, and the opportunity to have the choice of whether to be in management or not. In this frame of reference, Pence (1989) stated that "internships help prepare administrators for their jobs" (p. 31). Johnsrud (1990) suggested that "an internship requires advance planning to secure the support of the appropriate administrators and to ensure the current responsibilities are met" (p. 63). According to several respondents, administrative internship programs were perceived to be useful but not practical because there was no decision-making responsibility. In addition, this process did not address the opportunity of progressive movement within the organization. However, this mechanism was ranked highly by the respondents as an effective means of progressing to other positions.

Employee Exchange Programs

Even though exchange programs were not ranked as being one of the most effective succession planning strategies by the respondents, there were still many favorable comments. The respondents stated that exchange programs allowed candidates to look at things from a different perspective, and a broadening of experience occurred. Hall (1986) viewed employee exchange programs as an environmental method of learning because it places a person in a different environment to acquire new knowledge, and it includes a "broadening" or developmental assignment in another department or division. Also, because this broadening process occurs, it can

be used in succession planning (p. 254). However, one of the respondents said that it had nothing to do with succession planning. The respondents agreed on the need to make sure that the employee exchange role offered significant challenge and complemented the candidate's ability and learning. Gardner (1987b, cited in Moss & Liang, 1990) stated that this process looks toward leadership development and it has been feebly used in the past in developing leadership (p. 16). It appears that employee exchange programs have not been used to their fullest capacity to this time at the Institute.

Formal Training Programs

The respondents in the current study agreed with Hall (1986) that classroom teaching was overused for teaching management theory because it was an easy way to conduct learning. Walker (1992) claimed that formal training programs should be planned according to the needs of the management candidate and the needs of the organization (p. 248). This fit with respondents' comments that formal training programs need to fit with the needs of management and the organization. Therefore, topics should focus on issues that affect postsecondary technical institutions today. Otherwise, courses could be redundant.

Job Rotation

Job rotation was ranked most highly by the respondents in the current study as a strategy for preparing management staff for other positions in the organization. The respondents concurred with Getty (1993) that job rotation is a method to facilitate succession planning (p. 32). Also, the respondents agreed with Hall (1986) that job rotation is a means for "development" in broadening one's skills and insights (p. 254). They also agreed with Walker (1992) that because vertical movement is restricted today, job rotations can still be used to train and develop individuals (p. 207). Lastly, Katz (1974) viewed this method as an opportunity to enhance conceptual skills

(p. 101). Therefore, job rotation ranked as the most effective succession planning mechanism.

Lateral Job Movements

Lateral job movements were not seen by the respondents as a particularly good mechanism for preparing management staff for other positions in the organization. However, the respondents agreed with Walker (1992) that lateral job movements are a means for continual growth and learning because jobs are in flux and are more interesting and challenging (p. 207). This is especially important in today's environment, which is focused on downsizing, resulting in fewer positions and vertical promotions.

Mentorship

Mentorship was ranked highly by the respondents in this study as a means of preparing management staff for other positions in the organization. The respondents agreed with Kram (1985, cited in Summers-Ewing, 1994) that this method involves "developing trust" (p. 2) between two individuals of differing levels of experience, and counseling and friendship play a role in career and relationship development. The respondents agreed with Summers-Ewing (1994) that "formal and informal mentoring" (p. 1) exist. However, informal mentorship is more prevalent and more widely used in most organizations.

Secondments

The respondents ranked secondments highly as a means of preparing management staff for other positions in the organization. They agreed with Hall (1986) that this method is "'developmental' or a broadening of skills and knowledge" (p. 254). Primarily, it offers the organization new learning when the candidate returns to a previous position.

Overall, according to the respondents, the most effective mechanisms for developing management staff included job rotations, formal training programs, mentorship and secondments, and administrative internship programs. However, each mechanism has to be looked at individually to see whether it fits the developmental needs of the individual and the organization.

Framework for Management Staff in Progressing to Other Positions

In comparing the framework in Figure 3 to the literature in this area, Achilles (1987) developed a model for preparing educational leaders. Some of his thoughts paralleled the headings outlined in Figure 3. First, the respondents concurred with Achilles, who claimed that there was a lack of a model for formal processes in preparing individuals for administration. Individuals can take courses, but there has been no program structure and sequence. Therefore, Achilles proposed the areas of (a) pre-preparation, (b) program, and (c) post-program in his model (p. 1). Achilles explained pre-preparation as proper academic preparation, individual commitment, recruitment, and selection (p. 2). This fits with Brian's comments that a master's degree is a minimum requirement for continuing a career at the Institute. Achilles asserted that recruitment and selection of individuals should be based on screening processes to see if they "fit" in this line of work (p. 2). The respondents in the study also mentioned that screening processes such as OAD, JAX, MBTI, and SRI are used in postsecondary technical institutions. They are part of the executive career planning process and verify that they have the right attitude or commitment for this line of work. However, care was taken by the respondents in discussing whether these screening devices should be used as deciding factors in selecting potential management staff.

Achilles (1987) discussed *program* as acquiring knowledge through academic university courses, skills training in leadership programs, and clinical practice through internships and field practice. This fit with some of the respondents' comments that

theoretical education plus practical experience are important. Lastly, Achilles discussed *post-program* or assessment feedback and follow-up of the program. Mentorship was used as a means to ensure that learning was built in to continue learning. The respondents agreed with Achilles on the need for feedback as part of the support process. This was important to develop management staff.

Succession Planning Process

Many similarities can be seen in the model for succession planning developed by Rothwell (1994) and the one that surfaced from the respondents' comments. Even though the steps in both of the processes were not sequentially the same, the content was very similar. First, both identified either a vision or a mission for the plan. Second, both mentioned the need to identify the program as a priority and to link it to organizational strategic plans by allocating resources. Third, both discussed the need to develop work requirements or competency profiles for the key leadership or management positions. Fourth, both addressed the need to identify individuals who qualify for advancement and management and to establish an administrative pool of talent. Fifth, both included developing competency skills profiles for each potential candidate to assess individuals' talents and "preparedness" for advancement. Sixth, both models claimed that after identifying knowledge gaps, the organization needed programs to develop future leaders in reference to the present and future needs of the organization. Seventh, in both models the process had to be evaluated to continue in order to improve succession planning in the organization. Lastly, both models identified the concept of a 360-degree feedback loop to provide ongoing communication through the process to support and encourage the candidates in the process. Even though the respondents stated that they lacked knowledge about succession planning, the steps that they outlined collectively in their discussions reflected the main characteristics of Rothwell's (1994) model.

External Environmental Forces

The respondents at the Institute recognized that the external environmental forces of demographics, economics, technology, and trends were issues that were affecting the organization and influencing succession planning. In reference to this point, Walker (1992) observed, as did Greer, Jackson, and Fiorito (1989) and Ulrich (1989), that these issues represent problems or opportunities for changes from the current situation. These changes represent ways that a company may achieve or enhance a competitive edge (p. 27). In other words, problems can be viewed as opportunities. With regard to these external environmental forces, they include, first of all, the aging management population that was retiring at the Institute and creating an "experience gap." This brought to light the need for developing future leaders and viewing succession planning as a possible means. Likewise, Walker (1992), in his comments on demographic change, stated that

> in the 1960s and 1980s, it was a buyer's market for talent. There was ample talent in the work force, fed by new entrants in the baby boom bulge of the population. In the 1990s and beyond, entry-level is scarce; and the work force, like the population, is aging. The combination of these factors will result in shortages of talent in many areas. Companies need to act creatively to ensure that they will attract, retain, and effectively manage the talent they need. (p. 45)

According to Brian, a program called *Human Resource Renewal* is underway to improve efficiency and effectiveness and to reinvest in people.

Walker (1992) also addressed downsizing and the effect that it has on management: "Companies are striving to make their organizations flatter, resulting in broader scope responsibilities to management at all levels. Middle management is redefined to take on more responsibility for translating strategy into operational plans" (p. 42). Even though the organizations are decreasing in "people" power, customers still have expectations of quality. In this frame of reference, Walker stated that

> organizations need to be leaner and more flexible as well. They may resemble a network, with a blend of hierarchy, entrepreneurial units, and decentralized structure. The aim is to increase the capacity to act swiftly, creatively, and efficiently to meet customer need or competitive challenges. More work is performed through ad hoc teams involving people from different groups. The distinction between staff and line blurs. (p. 42)

Walker highlighted this point further by stating that "the emphasis will be on the abilities, skills, and performance of employees who satisfy customer needs 100 percent every time" (p. 25).

The respondents confirmed that having a technological edge was vital for survival. Walker (1992) put this into perspective by stating that

> information technologies are changing the way people communicate, work, and play. Information is not controlled by the management hierarchy, but is readily and quickly available to all employees, empowering them to direct participants in the management of the business. . . . Introduction of advanced technology provides only a temporary competitive advantage, as other quickly achieve parity by catching up. It is effective *application* of the technology—the productively through people—yields an advantage. (p. 39)

Lastly, trends also affect the organization. Walker (1992) stated that organizations need to collect and examine data on future trends and changes. This is important so that relevant information is not missed because it could impact on the organization (p. 26). Doug, for example, identified a number of authors such as John Cotter, William Bridges, Margaret Wheatly, Steven Covey, and Peter Senge, who discussed the topics of leadership, change, work, and quality that need attention today. Overall, external environmental forces affect how organizations set future objectives and goals.

Internal Environmental Forces

Internal environmental forces include the culture of the Institute, CQI, and bureaucracy. For example, the culture in an organization sets the stage for how the organization is run. Walker (1992) stated that

> culture is a powerful competitive weapon. When people share common values and beliefs, and live by common norms of behavior, they can achieve outstanding results. . . . Similarly, culture is a constraint or obstacle to desired change when it is not aligned with strategy. When there are many different sets of values and different norms for behavior, there is a lack of integration that undermines strategic focus, implementation of business plans, consistent service to customers, and teamwork. . . . The explicit and implicit cultures need to be integrated, or at least made consistent. Otherwise the organization will end up with two separate cultures: the explicit culture, emphasized by management, and the implicit culture, reflected in the behavior of people in the organization. (p. 116)

The respondents' comments regarding the culture of the Institute varied from person to person. First of all, Blair identified the competition model as being used to promote management staff. Doug and Susan believed that the organization is traditional, and to progress in the organization one must pay dues and take progression in a predetermined and traditional order. Power held by a select core of individuals exists in the organization; this core of individuals controls the structure. Secondly, there is a clear demarcation between academic and nonacademic areas. Very few people cross over and work in the other area. Finally, Doug, Susan, and Blair suggested that there needs to be more encouragement to progress within the organization. This was supported by Doug's comment that there is little mentoring because "there is a certain system, and it's worked well." These points reflect how the model is influenced by the internal forces of culture.

It appears that the past traditions of promoting management staff through a competition model have worked well and that this competitive process complements the public sector's method of staff selection. For example, because education is public and its funding is obtained from the government, it is only natural for the organization to use similar government processes. However, with the implementation of succession planning as part of the Human Resource Renewal program in June 1998, a number of points come to light. For example, Blair contended that the institution is more a business or a corporation than a governmental agency. For this type of business

approach, the good things of succession planning, career planning, and carving out career paths for individuals are utilized.

CQI has become part of the Institute's culture. Team building and collaborative decision making are key components, with the objective of improving efficiency and exceeding customers' expectations. According to Blair, there is the concern regarding how quality management looks at succession planning. Rothwell (1994) claimed that the implications of teams for succession planning are significant because teams build cross-functional expertise by potentially giving nonmanagement employees experience in managerial work (p. 287). Furthermore, he saw the benefits of teams and succession planning. Teams can function as talent pools for succession planning in which many individual have been cross trained on different jobs.

Bureaucracies have their pros and cons; Walker (1992) stated that "flexible HR [human resources] functions aggressively seek to be perceived as `bureaucracy busters,' setting an example for other staff functions and line organizations" (p. 318). The respondents stated that bureaucracy still plays a major role in the organization even though the premise of CQI is "decision making by teams." It is evident that conflict exists in this area at the Institute. It appears that many internal environmental forces play a major role in shaping the organization.

Summary

Discussion of the findings in relationship to the literature were presented in this chapter. This information was categorized according to the headings of (a) perception of personal career success; (b) progression training and programs; (c) job movement programs; (d) job progression programs, which included the mechanisms of administrative internship programs, formal training programs, job rotation, lateral job movements, mentorship, and secondments; (e) framework for management staff in

progressing to other positions; (f) the succession planning process; and (g) internal and external environments.

Seven relationships between the findings and the literature were addressed in this chapter. First, there was general agreement between the respondents and the literature that perception of personal career success comes from (a) having the "right attitude"; (b) having technical, interpersonal, and conceptual skills; (c) obtaining diverse experiences; (d) satisfying personal learning; (e) working in an organization that created a learning climate; and (f) "being at the right place at the right time." Second, there was conformity between the respondents and the literature that a "plan" was required in training and developing individuals for progression within the organization. An example of such a plan would be the succession planning process. Third, there was agreement on the necessity of a formal training program on career development that would be part of the plan. This component includes the areas of screening, assessment, and identifying career and personal needs. In addition, feedback was discussed as an important part of this developmental process. Fourth, in a discussion of each job progression program, there was a match of information between the respondents and the literature. For example, job rotation was rated the most effective of all mechanisms in preparing management staff for other positions in organizations. Formal training programs need to fit with the needs of management and the organization, mentorship develops trust between people, secondments broadens knowledge, administrative internship programs offer an opportunity to work in management without a permanent commitment, lateral job movements offer continual growth, and employee exchange programs offer a broadening of experience. There was also agreement on the importance of planning, use, organization, and fit of the programs with the individual and the organization. Fifth, there was conformity between the respondents and the literature on the need for a model in preparing educational

leaders. Achilles (1987) proposed the areas of (a) *pre-preparation* or academic preparation, commitment, recruitment, and selection; (b) *program* or academic courses, leadership programs, internship, and practicums; and (c) *post-programs* or feedback and follow-up in this model. The components in Achilles' model reflect the respondents' comments on the need for (a) formal training through university courses and leadership courses, (b) experience through diverse jobs and internships, (c) intrinsic qualities or personal desire and commitment, and (d) feedback on the process. Even though the structure of the models was not identical, the components were similar. Sixth, there was compliance between the succession planning model developed by Rothwell (1994) and the comments by the respondents. Seventh, there was agreement that the internal and external environmental forces affected the organization and influenced the need for succession planning. External factors included changing demographics, competition, technology, and the trend toward learning organizations; whereas internal environments included culture, politics, and bureaucracies. Overall, there was general agreement between the respondents and the literature.

The next chapter addresses responses to the research questions, conclusions, recommendations, and reflections regarding this study.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND REFLECTIONS

This chapter is divided into five main sections: (a) an overview of the study, (b) responses and conclusions to the research question, (c) recommendations for practice, (d) recommendations for theory, and (e) personal reflections on the topic.

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine how management staff develop their careers in postsecondary technical institutions. It was important to examine the perceptions of management staff as to what they needed to achieve career success.

It was the intent of the study to address the following research problem and its sub-problems.

Research Problem

The research problem was to identify forms of succession planning perceived by management staff to be effective for helping to improve career development at a postsecondary educational institute of technology in Western Canada.

Sub-Problems

1. What factors do management staff perceive to have contributed to the success of their careers at the Institute?

2. Are management staff offered any special training or programs to assist them in progressing within the organization?

3. What programs would be helpful in assisting management staff to progress to other positions within the Institute?

4. What mechanisms are seen to have potential for helping management staff to progress to other positions within the Institute?

The literature reviewed supported the need for succession planning or a structured career developmental plan for management staff to achieve ongoing learning and growth for themselves and for the organization.

The data were gathered through the use of semistructured interviews. The respondents were chosen from set criteria focusing on management staff who were in three different career developmental stages. Therefore, a range of perceptions was obtained from the three different groups. Interviews were audiotaped, transcribed, and analyzed to determine common themes. Because the interviews were semistructured, many of the themes were predetermined. These themes reflected the findings from the literature.

Responses and Conclusions to the Research Question

The research was guided by one main research question and four related sub-questions. The following discussion will address the sub-problems first and then offer responses to the main research question. Here, the findings were summarized, and conclusions were drawn from these findings.

Sub-Problem 1

What factors do management staff perceive to have contributed to the success of their careers at the Institute?

Management attributed the success of their careers at the Institute to a number of factors: (a) being "at the right place at the right time," (b) having the "right attitude," (c) having a diverse background, (d) working in an environment that stimulated learning and growth, (e) having the power to make change, (f) being challenged, (g) having a sense of accomplishment, and (h) maintaining a certain quality of life or balance. Overall, success came from growth and learning where opportunities to work in diverse jobs were available. This was made possible because the organizational climate stimulated learning by giving the power and authority to cause

change and make decisions. All of these complemented the intrinsic qualities of wanting to be challenged, desiring to make a contribution, and acquiring personal learning.

Management staff appear to need ongoing learning opportunities and challenges because they personally yearn for these aspects as part of their lives. This "curiosity" then often leads to obtaining new opportunities to work in different positions and to acquire diverse experiences. This is further enhanced when "luck" or "fate" deals a favorable hand by "being at the right place at the right time" to acquire these new chances, to work in positive economic times, and to function in a culture that believes in learning and growth. Success was perceived in various ways; these perceptions included having (a) the desire to learn, (b) diversity, (c) power, (d) proper attitude, (e) good timing, and (f) a high quality of life. Therefore, it is concluded that in order for executives to feel that they have achieved success in their careers, they need ongoing learning that offers growth and challenge.

Sub-Problem 2

Are management staff offered any special training or programs to assist them in progressing within the organization?

It appears that the main objective of the Institute was to offer quality teaching to students. Therefore, the goal of the Institute was to assist individuals to become better teachers through inservice training and obtaining teaching credentials. Individuals who aspired to management positions developed their own "courses of action." From an individual perspective this was based primarily on trying to determine what the unwritten rules of the organization were and to act accordingly. It involved recognizing that it "takes time" to move into managerial positions because of the limited number of positions available and the notion that "dues have to be paid." This meant becoming

known, proving oneself, developing a network of contacts, and being at the "right place at the right time" to impress superordinates with one's knowledge and skills.

In this way, the need for taking inservice courses to understand the processes of the organization, working on high-profile committees and CQI teams, acquiring different positions through leaves inside and outside the organization, and obtaining university credentials set the foundation for management careers. However, even with all of these requirements in place, there was still no guarantee of obtaining desired positions because "life has its way" of modifying people's goals. Serendipity has a manner of changing people's career directions and aspirations. Consequently, the culture of the Institute is not to directly groom individuals for senior-level positions as in the private sector, but to enhance the quality of teaching because "teaching" is the primary concern of the organization.

Therefore, it is concluded that management staff are not offered any special training or programs to assist them in progressing within the organization. However, self-directed or self-motivated individuals aspiring to management positions determine the "formula for success" and the culture of the organization and develop their own "courses of action" for progressing within the Institute.

Sub-Problem 3

What programs would be helpful in assisting management staff to progress to other positions within the Institute?

It appears that management staff need "customized" career developmental programs to assist them in progressing to other positions within the Institute. This would involve identifying organizational goals, establishing a stronger performance review process, utilizing screening processes, developing an inventory of skills for potential management personnel, establishing competencies for management positions, conducting a "gap" analysis to determine training requirements for each individual, and

fitting people's needs with the needs of the organization. This is reinforced by feedback, support by peers and the culture, and an understanding that people need a balance in life. An example of a customized career developmental process is succession planning.

This succession planning process would tie together, for management staff, their university courses, leadership courses, inservice courses, conference attendance, committee work, and work experiences and leaves through job rotation, secondments, and administrative internship programs. Consequently, this formalized plan would fill management knowledge "gaps" in order for them to progress to future positions, while fulfilling the needs of the organization. This is essential to develop leaders for the future: It is a process that cannot be left to chance. Even though the Institute has been very successful in the past, new directions for organizational survival are essential today; this is especially important during the present time of change, downsizing, and uncertainty. In conclusion, management staff need "customized" career developmental programs such as succession planning to assist them in progressing to other positions within the Institute.

Sub-Problem 4

What mechanisms are seen to have potential for helping management staff to progress to other positions within the Institute?

The mechanisms of (a) administrative internship programs, (b) employee exchange programs, (c) formal training programs, (d) job rotation, (e) lateral job movements, (f) mentorship, and (g) secondments were seen as tools for management staff to acquire theoretical knowledge and practical experience. The three mechanisms that were perceived to be most effective in preparing management staff for other positions included (a) job rotation; (b) formal training programs, mentorship,

secondments; and (c) administrative internship programs. These were seen as the most valuable mechanisms for several reasons.

Job rotations ranked first because they offer an opportunity for developing skills and gaining new insights, especially because there is a lack of vertical opportunities today. As a result, ongoing learning can still be achieved. Job rotations were also seen as a way to facilitate succession planning.

Formal training programs, mentorship, and secondments tied and ranked second. Even though they are very different from one another, they contribute to increasing knowledge and developing skills. For example, formal training programs give individuals theoretical knowledge through the use of models or frameworks. Mentorship provides learning by building trust with selected people within the organization. Secondments offer a great opportunity to acquire new learning in a different job or organization and to bring back this newly obtained knowledge to a previous job or position. Therefore, they are all different but have individual strengths.

Finally, administrative internship programs ranked third. They offer the experience to work in management and the opportunity to decide if a career in management is desired for the future.

Hence, experience, knowledge, and trust are important in learning. The key is to have a fit between the appropriate mechanism, the individual's training needs, and the needs of the organization. Therefore, it was concluded that (a) job rotation, (b) formal training programs, (c) mentorship, (d) secondments, and (e) administrative internship programs are the most effective mechanisms in helping management staff to progress to other positions within the Institute.

Main Research Question

The research problem is to identify forms of succession planning perceived by management staff to be effective for helping to improve career development at a postsecondary technical institution in Western Canada.

It appears that the mechanisms or forms of succession planning that were perceived by management staff to be most effective in improving career development at the Institute included (a) job rotation, (b) formal training programs, (c) mentorship, (d) secondments, and (e) administrative internship programs. However, it was noticed that these were only a small part of what management staff need to progress within the Institute. Primarily, these are tools to be used to gain theoretical knowledge and practical experience and are part of the "bigger picture" of career development for management staff.

This holistic view of career development for management staff aims at developing staff to progress to other positions within the Institute and has various components. These components include, first, acquiring theoretical knowledge through formal training, which involves obtaining university credentials, enrolling in executive leadership courses, taking personalized career development programs, and taking inservice courses. Second, practical experience is gained by working in diverse jobs, having the opportunity to be mentored, and gaining organizational exposure by doing committee work and volunteering for CQI teams. Also, broadening work experience through administrative internship programs, employee exchange programs, job rotation, lateral job movements, secondments, and attending conferences is an additional means. Third, intrinsic management qualities are part of the framework for job progression and career development. This means having the personal traits or the right "attitude" of empathy, adaptability, flexibility, assertiveness; and liking people.

Lastly, "luck" comes into play because "being at the right place at the right time" determines whether opportunities to progress to other positions occur.

This holistic view of career development can be formalized into a "customized career development program" for each management staff member that is part of the succession planning process. The objective of the process is to ensure continuity of leadership by developing management staff, encouraging individual growth, and replacing key people within the organization over time. In other words, succession planning can also be viewed as an instrument for implementing an organization's strategic or long-term plans because its premise is to develop individuals according to the future needs of the organization.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the forms of succession planning are only some of the ways to help management staff to improve their career development by obtaining theoretical knowledge and practical experience. The concept of succession planning can be viewed as a means of career development for management staff that encompasses this "big picture" and utilizes the mechanisms or forms of succession planning in the process. It works on the premise that the future needs of the organization must be considered and that individuals must be developed in this frame of reference.

Recommendations for Practice

Rothwell (1994) maintained that "having the right leaders at the right places at the right times to do the right things" is a way to help the organization meet the strategic and operational challenges facing it" (p. 6). As a result, recommendations for individuals interested in applying the current findings to practice and research emerged from the above conclusions.

Because a Human Resource Renewal process is underway at the Institute and a succession plan for the organization is scheduled to be adopted in June 1998, the areas of concern during this transition include the following:

1. Encourage and implement learning for management staff by theoretical and experiential means. Enhance theoretical learning through formal training programs such as university training, leadership courses, career development, and inservice courses. Encourage experiential learning through diverse jobs, job rotations, mentorship, secondments, administrative internship programs, internal and external committee work, CQI team work and facilitation, and business partnership development. All these programs should be developed to fit the needs of the individual and the organization, with the objective of reinforcing technical and interpersonal skills and enhancing conceptual skills.

2. Implement a model or framework as outlined in Figure 3 for potential management staff and management staff of what is required to progress within the organization. In addition, consider the barriers that lessen the opportunity for these individuals to progress within the Institute. For example, look for ways to decrease the boundaries between academic and nonacademic areas to provide an understanding of each other's roles in order to acknowledge differences and similarities in job content. The academic areas include the instructors or teachers who have direct contact with students, and the nonacademic areas include the administrative staff such as management staff, facilities personnel, and financial staff who give support to the academic function. Hence, parallels can be made with similar work areas so that job exchanges can be instigated. For example, academic staff teaching human resources can exchange positions with human resource personnel to acquire new learning and experience. Also, merging similar work areas may help to lessen bureaucracy.

The Institute also needs to ensure that staff receive feedback, encouragement, support, positive reinforcement, and appreciation by implementing an appropriate model for succession planning. This model will satisfy the basic need for self-esteem. Humans need praise, gratitude, and recognition for the work they do in order to feel a sense of accomplishment and respect from others. This can be facilitated by common courtesies, professional manners, a positive attitude, respect for one another, and acknowledgment of work done. These "niceties" may appear insignificant and are easily ignored, but they have a great impact on staff morale.

3. Implement a model or framework as outlined in Figure 4 to assist in progressing to other positions within the Institute. In this process, decide how to integrate succession planning with CQI and into the organization so that the entire organization accepts the process. Because CQI uses a team approach to improve the operation of the organization in meeting customer needs, these teams can function as "talent pools" in which many individuals from different parts of the organization have been cross trained in diverse areas of knowledge. As a result, individuals who frequently work on different teams are continually gaining new learning. These individuals can be viewed as potential leaders for the future if they aspire to leadership positions.

Also, in reference to team building, new techniques in leadership are required in an evolving team-based organization. The skills of inspiring, developing trust, and coaching are essential for survival today. For example, mentoring can assist in developing these skills. Succession planning focuses on what is needed for organizational survival and for the growth of its future leaders. Thus, succession planning satisfies an immediate need for grooming new leaders in an organization that accepts the CQI premise. Succession planning is a natural evolution of developing people in a quality environment. Therefore, it is important to show that success

planning satisfies a need by bridging it directly to organizational and human resource strategic plans.

4. Make more extensive use of the forms of succession planning that were perceived by the respondents to be the most effective in preparing management staff for other positions in the Institute. These included: (a) job rotation, (b) formal training programs, (c) mentorship, (d) secondments, and (e) administrative internship programs. In this way, these mechanisms can be used for helping management staff to obtain new learning and challenge through different job experiences, which in the long run reflect a more diverse experiential background.

It is strongly recommended that more extensive use of job rotations be considered for implementation by the Institute. Job rotation works on the premise of rotating individuals across different functions or departments to broaden their experiences. As a result, job rotations have been identified as a means of enhancing conceptual skills and critical to the development of executive talent.

5. Ensure that the needs of management staff are addressed in reference to career progress in view of the new succession planning structure. This can be addressed using a combination of four strategies. First, utilize the forms of succession planning that were perceived to be the most effective for management staff to progress within the Institute. These included: (a) job rotations, (b) formal training programs, (c) mentorship, (d) secondments, and (e) administrative internship programs. Second, management staff need a customized career development plan for their courses, work experiences, and leaves, and this process can be directed toward filling their knowledge "gaps" and bridging this information to future positions. Third, management staff need ongoing learning, growth, power to make change or challenge, and a sense of accomplishment to set the foundation for these requirements. This is accomplished by working in different positions and in an organizational culture where these needs are

believed and supported. Fourth, acknowledge the importance of these first three strategies by incorporating a "checklist" of the needs generated from these strategies in the 360-degree-feedback component of the new succession planning process. This aids as a reminder of the significance of these three areas.

Decide if succession planning can be applied to the entire organization and not just to management staff. This may include succession planning for the support areas of physical plant personnel and secretarial staff to move to the academic areas of instructional staff. Thus, individuals would have the opportunity to learn continuously by being able to identify their educational and developmental needs to meet their career goals and to be considered as potential leaders in the organization should they aspire to leadership positions. Using management staff as an example in the succession planning process helps to determine if and how succession planning can be applied to the entire organization.

Next, depending on how extensively succession planning will be implemented within the Institute, thought can be given to the following approach by its administration. In implementing this process, the Institute's management staff from different areas can present to each other their proposed succession plans for their work units. Therefore, by discussing their individual organizational plans and potential candidates, learning is acquired about talent in other work areas. Thus, managers can recommend employees who may be overlooked as potential candidates by supervisors of different departments.

In addition, the following will help management staff in their career development:

6. To view a career path as a *web* versus a *ladder,* which offsets the lack of fewer advancement opportunities by encouraging lateral moves and learning new skills.

7. To "know themselves" by addressing their motivations, flexibility, stress tolerance, strengths, weaknesses, and "EQ," or emotional quotient. They could utilize screening tools such as JAX, MBTI, OAD, and SRI to assist them in this analysis.

8. To obtain support, feedback, encouragement, recognition, and evaluation. *360-degree feedback* is an example of formal feedback and evaluation.

9. To obtain conceptual skill learning in order to see the organization as a whole and how the parts of the organization affect the whole.

10. To obtain a balance of personal life and work life are essential because management work is demanding, and mental and physical health is required for quality work performance.

Recommendations for Theory

Recommendations for future research on succession planning resulting from the findings of this study are presented below.

1. Continue qualitative research on career development for management staff in postsecondary technical institutions because there is limited literature on this topic in the educational databases. Also, most of the literature on this topic is from the United States and is business based. Therefore, continued research on succession planning in postsecondary educational institutions would be an asset.

2. For the most part, the findings in the study supported much of the conceptual framework shown in Figure 1 that emerged from the literature. Figure 5 is a result of expanding the conceptual framework developed from the literature to incorporate the findings of this study. In a description of the framework and the components, (a) inputs, (b) process, (c) outputs, (d) environmental forces, and (e) feedback, as shown in Figure 5, are discussed below.

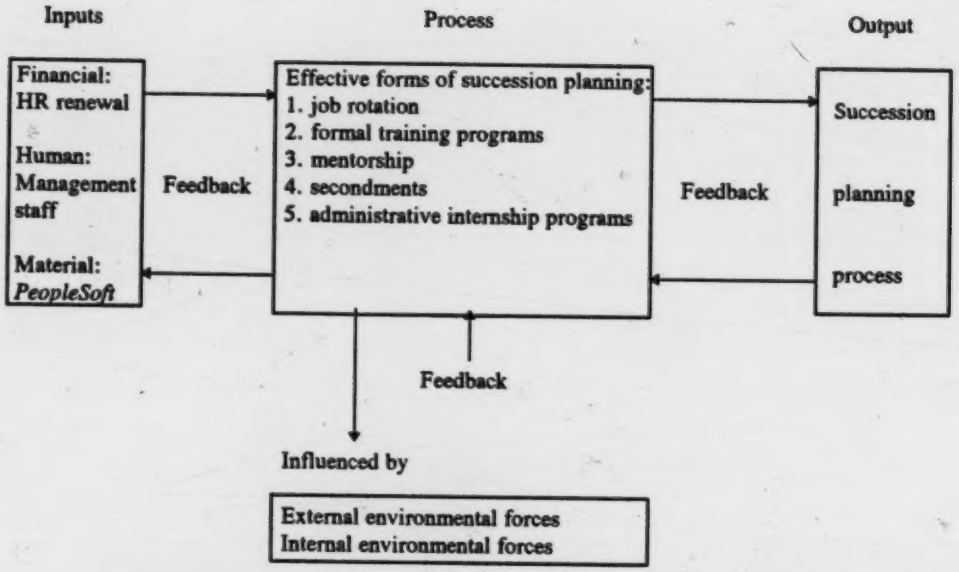


Figure 5. Conceptual framework for succession planning from the findings.

Inputs

Inputs, or the resources that made succession planning possible, include a financial commitment to the Human Resource Renewal program at the Institute. This resulted from feedback from the Institute's customers and staff that identified the importance of human resource development in improving organizational efficiency and effectiveness. To facilitate this Human Resource Renewal program, software programs, such as *PeopleSoft*, will simplify the process of human resource management. Specifically, the succession planning segment of the *PeopleSoft* program will be integrated in June 1998.

Process

Process refers to the forms or mechanisms of succession planning that in essence are the tools used to gain theoretical knowledge and practical experience and facilitate career development for management staff. Management staff perceived that

the most effective mechanisms for improving career development at the Institute in today's environment included (a) job rotation, (b) formal training programs, (c) mentorship, (d) secondments, and (e) administrative internship programs.

Outputs

Outputs refers to the benefits of the succession planning process, which allow management staff to have a "customized" career development plan to assist them in progressing to other positions within the organization. This plan includes identifying a skills inventory for management positions, addressing management staff's personal learning, finding opportunities to fill learning gaps, evaluating the process, and obtaining feedback. In other words, management staff are provided the opportunity of being assessed, developed, and evaluated according to their needs and the needs of the organization. This in the end creates a "talent pool" of management staff who will lead the organization in the future.

External and Internal Environmental Forces

The framework is influenced by external and internal environmental forces. Specifically, external environmental forces refer to competition, demographics, technology, and trends. For example, technology and competition are pushing the Institute to be more information based with the need for developing executives within a flatter organizational structure. Internal environments include culture, politics, and bureaucracy. At the Institute, CQI has become an important dimension of the culture. The move to embed quality principles in its operation to achieve efficiency has been the objective. This has resulted in the creation of a team environment and the need to develop management staff in this context.

Feedback

All of these components need to be tied together by feedback for revision and improvements of the inputs, processes, and outputs as the needs of people and the organization change. A formal method of feedback is 360-degree feedback that can be utilized to facilitate these changes. Specifically, 360-degree feedback is a psychological assessment for management staff to obtain an unbiased evaluation of their performance from their peers, customers, and work contacts. This would be a valuable tool in developing staff because information is obtained from various sources and helps in career development, which is part of the succession planning process.

Conceptual Framework

Overall, the conceptual framework summarizes how the inputs and processes help to generate the output of the succession planning process. This means that the environmental influences of changing demographics, the flattening of bureaucratic structures, technological change, operating with fewer resources, and functioning within CQI guidelines have influenced the need to improve efficiency and effectiveness within the Institute and have resulted in the creation of a Human Resources Renewal program. Specifically for management staff, the succession planning segment of the *PeopleSoft* program will assist in developing future leaders at the Institute. The process of developing these leaders could encompass the forms or mechanisms of succession planning, which act as tools in gaining theoretical knowledge and practical experience. For example, job rotation was perceived as the most effective mechanism in assisting staff to progress to other positions within the organization because it enhances conceptual skills and develops individuals at a time of limited organizational promotions.

Process helps to generate the output of the succession planning process because the effective forms of succession planning act as opportunities to fill learning gaps for

management staff. In other words, management staff are developed according to their needs and the needs of the organization. In addition, the components of assessment and evaluated are tied to this process. The concept of 360-degree feedback can be used to formalize this area.

Finally, ongoing feedback is essential throughout the framework and its components of inputs, process, and outputs. This is essential for continual revision and improvement, an adaptation to environmental influences, financial change, evaluation of processes, and revision of succession planning to meet participant and organizational needs. Overall, the framework acts as a summary or guide to help understand the succession planning process.

Reflections

It became obvious that management staff at the Institute needed ongoing learning, growth, challenge, and a sense of accomplishment in their work. Also, the desire for pride, usefulness, and respect showed their humanness. Fundamentally, these are basic needs and desires that most people long for in their personal and work lives. Unfortunately, these needs are not always met in people's work lives. However, management staff have the unique attribute of being self-directed, which drives them into action to fulfill these yearnings. Consequently, organizational success in the past has been enhanced by these self-directed drivers who give themselves unselfishly to their organization.

It is clear that the dynamics of doing business today are changing. The "hard work" ethic is not sufficient for organizational survival. It must be remembered that "organizations are people," and if people are not directed and satisfied in their work they knowingly or unknowingly can sabotage the success of the organization. With today's competitive pressure to be the "best," management staff need to be trained

accordingly. Their desire for "customized career plans" reflects their needs for growth, personally and for the organization. Succession planning fulfills this gap.

The concept of succession planning primarily focuses on preparing potential staff for future management or executive positions. Succession planning allows these individuals to develop careers within the organization by recognizing their needs as they grow and the needs of the organization as it changes to adapt to environmental forces. Today, quality management is an powerful notion on how organizations do business because the motivation is to gain a competitive edge and that is the key to existence. The focus is on team decision making, employee commitment, a vision-driven organization, organizational accountability, and a corresponding need to develop management staff and leaders who perform in these conjectures. The concept of succession planning helps to smooth the way for quality management because management staff have been developed according to the quality-driven needs of the organization. As a result, succession planning cannot be ignored today as a possible means for future-leader development.

Succession planning should not, however, be limited to management. The remainder of the staff who have survived downsizing are also the people who will take the organization forward into the future. These staff also need continuous learning: Learning needs to occur throughout the entire organization. An organization that improves its personnel improves itself. In education, improving educators is a way of improving the educational system and meeting the ever-increasing needs of students.

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Appendix A

Invitation to Participate

Department of Educational Policy Studies
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2G5

March 17, 1997

Dear _____:

I am an instructor at the Institute and a Master's student at the University of Alberta studying educational administration. My thesis topic is "Succession planning for postsecondary educational institutions." I am requesting your participation in this research study because your perceptions on this area would be valuable to the study.

My focus is to identify forms of succession planning for management staff that could be effective for helping to improve their career development at postsecondary institutions. For example, these forms include administrative internship programs, formal training programs, job rotation, lateral job movements, and secondments. As a result, these could allow for a "preparedness" for future leaders. The research study is timely because in postsecondary institutions a knowledge gap is being left by key administrators and management staff who are retiring.

Having completed a research proposal, I am currently working on my thesis and am ready to start my data collection. The data gathering involves one-on-one interviews with key management staff at the Institute. My proposal has been approved by a University Ethics Committee, and it has been given consent by the Institute to proceed.

As a participant in this study you will be required to be interviewed by me at a time that is convenient for you. The interview will last about one hour. It is anticipated that this activity will take place during the month of April 1997. A copy of the interview questions is enclosed for your review.

You are without obligation and may at any time withdraw your consent to participate in the study. Your name, the Institute's name, and descriptions will be left out or disguised to preserve anonymity. Your responses will be kept confidential. Also, the interview transcripts will be returned for your feedback on the accuracy of the information acquired.

Following the study you will be provided with a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations. If you require further information, it will be made available.

Should you wish to be involved or require more information, please contact me at home at 484-1891. I will be calling you during the week of March 24-27, 1997, to discuss the project with you further and possibly arrange a suitable time for an interview.

I am looking forward to talking to you soon.

Sincerely,

Barbara Cembrowski

Appendix B

Interview Schedule for Main Study

Note: The intent of these questions is to determine how management staff perceive succession planning as a way to improve their career development at the Institute.

Pilot Questions

1. How many years have you been with the Institute?
2. What positions have you held over those years?
3. Do you feel you have been successful in this position/these positions over the years?

   Probe: What sorts of things are you most proud of?
4. What do you feel has attributed to your success at the Institute?

   Probe: What have been your motivations?

   Probe: Did you receive any encouragement to advance in the organization?

   Probe: Explain.
5. Have there been any impediments to your career development at the Institute?

   Probe: Explain.
6. What do you think management staff need to progress to other positions at the Institute?

   Probe: Is this what is needed to succeed in today's environment of restructuring, downsizing, and change?

   Probe: How has the restructuring of the organization affected your career development?
7. Does the Institute offer any special training or programs to assist individuals in developing a career at the Institute?

   Probe: What are they?
8. Have you taken advantage of this special training or these programs to assist you in your career development?

Probe: Explain.

9. What is your opinion of the following succession planning mechanisms that can prepare management staff for other job positions at the Institute? (Show list).

    administrative internship programs

    employee exchange programs

    formal training programs

    job rotations

    lateral job movements

    mentorship

    secondments

    Probe: Are there any that management should favor?

    Probe: What three would you choose as the most important?

    Probe: How would you rank these three?

10. Would you say there is a climate or culture in the organization for succession planning?

    Probe: Explain.

11. Does the Institute's quality initiative fit with succession planning?

    Probe: Explain.

12. What other mechanisms do you think the Institute could offer to assist management staff to prepare them for other job positions?

13. What programs do you think the Institute should offer to assist management staff to progress to other positions?

14. Can you offer any additional thoughts or words of advice to what we have discussed today?

Appendix C

Initial Draft of Pilot Interview Schedule

Note: The intent of these questions is to determine how management staff perceive succession planning as a way to improve their career development in their organization.

Pilot Questions

1. Do you feel you have/had a career at the Institute? In other words, have you grown and progressed within the organization, and have your personal motivations and goals been met in this process?
2. How many years have you been with the Institute?
3. What positions have you held over those years?
4. Do you feel you have been successful in this position/these positions over the years?

   Probe: What sorts of things are you most proud of?
5. What do you feel has attributed to your success at the Institute?

   Probe: Explain
6. What do you perceive as impediments to career development at the Institute?
7. How would you define an *upwardly mobile* management staff member?
8. Does the Institute offer any special training or programs to assist individuals in developing a career?

   Probe: What are they?
9. Have you taken advantage of this special training or these programs to assist you in your career development?

   Probe: Explain.
10. What other programs do you think the Institute should offer to assist management staff to progress to other positions?

11. What do you think management staff need to progress to other positions at the Institute?

12. What mechanisms do you think the Institute could offer to assist management staff to prepare them for other job positions?

13. Can you define the following mechanisms that can prepare management staff for other job positions at the Institute?

(Show list).

administrative internship programs

employee exchange programs

formal training programs

job rotations

lateral job movements

mentorship

secondments

Probe: Explain

Appendix D

Final Draft of Pilot Interview Schedule

Note: The intent of these questions is to determine how management staff perceive succession planning as a way to improve their career development in their organization.

Pilot Questions

1. How many years have you been with the Institute?
2. What positions have you held over those years?
3. Do you feel you have been successful in this position/these positions over the years?

   Probe: What sorts of things are you most proud of?
4. What do you feel has attributed to your success at the Institute?

   Probe: What have been your motivations?
5. Have there been any impediments to your career development at the Institute?

   Probe: Explain.
6. What do you think management staff need to progress to other positions at the Institute?
7. Does the Institute offer any special training or programs to assist individuals in developing a career at the Institute?

   Probe: What are they?
8. Have you taken advantage of this special training or these programs to assist you in your career development?

   Probe: Explain.

9. What is your opinion of the following mechanisms that can prepare management staff for other job positions at the Institute?

(Show list).

- administrative internship programs
- employee exchange programs
- formal training programs
- job rotations
- lateral job movements
- mentorship
- secondments

Probe: Are there any that management should favor?

10. What other mechanisms do you think the Institute could offer to assist management staff to prepare them for other job positions?

11. What programs do you think the Institute should offer to assist management staff to progress to other positions?